

Jedi Counseling

Ray and Val Vallese

Does your friendly *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* campaign ever bog down over discussions and arguments about the rules? Maybe you're a Gamemaster who wants to be sure about a rule call or a player seeking an innovative way to solve a problem. No matter what kinds of questions you have about the *Star Wars* rules, we've got answers straight from game designer [JD Wiker](#), author and coauthor of many *Star Wars* products and free online features available on this website.

Starting now, you can send your rules questions to JD via email. Once or twice a month, we'll post a "Jedi Counseling" column of the questions and JD's answers right here. (Please note that JD might not get to your specific question right away and that he won't be able to send you a personal reply.)

The Q&A column was a popular feature of *Star Wars Gamer*, and while much of that magazine's content will continue to appear in *Star Wars Insider* and *Dungeon Adventures* (see this [press release](#) for details), we're happy to debut "Jedi Counseling" on the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* website. We hope it will continue to provide a great service to fans of the setting.

So [send your questions to JD](#) today, then check back often for the answers. Just remember that if you choose to think of JD as your own personal Yoda, it's best not to let him know.



Jedi Counseling 1: Drain Energy

[JD Wiker](#)

Arguments! Confusion! A *Star Wars* Gamemaster craves not these things! Read [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker's answers to your most perplexing rules questions. This installment of "Jedi Counseling" answers player questions about speed modifiers for atmospheric combats, the truth about Dissipate Energy, why Fear doesn't have a saving throw, and more!



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: In my campaign, all of the enemy pilots have only airspeeders, while the heroes have starfighters. I wanted to run scenarios in which the heroes face off against the enemy airspeeders, but I can't find a speed chart for atmospheric speed. There's one for ground vehicles, and one for space vehicles, but nothing in between.

A: Truly in tune with the Force you are -- because we hadn't noticed that. What's needed is a new speed table using the "one square = 50 meters" scale of atmospheric combat, one that applies both to airspeeders and to starships in atmosphere:

Speed Category	Squares per Move Action	Defense Modifier	Roll/Check Modifier
Stationary	0	-4	+0*
Docking	1-3	-2	+0
Cruising	4-8	+0	-1
Attack	9-15	+2	-2
Ramming	16+	+4	-4

* A stationary vehicle cannot make Pilot checks to perform stunts.

Q: My character has multiple attacks per round (because of his Base Attack Bonus of +13), and I'm trying to grapple. If I succeed on my first attempt, can I use the remaining attempts to inflict my unarmed damage? Or do I need to initiate a separate grapple for each of my unarmed attacks?

A: Your character can use his remaining attacks to inflict unarmed damage, and you don't need to initiate a separate grapple for each. You do need to make the opposed grapple check (as described on page 170 of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* [core rulebook](#)) for each attempt to inflict unarmed damage, though.

So, for example, if you have an opponent grappled and you have three attacks per round (because of your Base Attack Bonus), you can attempt three opposed grapple checks to inflict damage if you were already grappling; or one to grapple and two to inflict damage if you weren't already grappling; or two attempts at grappling and one to inflict damage (if the first grapple check fails).

Q: The feat Dissipate Energy seems overpowered to me. But then a friend said he saw some kind of FAQ about it that makes it less good. What's the story?

A: The write-up for Dissipate Energy managed to miss two important bits. First, the DC for the Fortitude saving throw should be "10 + damage dealt," not just "damage dealt." That makes it a bit harder to make the save, and therefore, a bit riskier. Second, the ability only applies when the character takes wound damage; it does nothing at all if the character takes only vitality damage (because vitality damage represents avoiding actual physical harm, and this feat isn't meant to work unless your body suffers energy damage).

For GMs struggling with how to get around a hero who has this feat, remember two things: One, it doesn't work against physical damage, and two, stun attacks inflict no wound damage.

Q: Speaking of "physical" damage, Force Grip says that it inflicts physical damage. In the original *Star Wars* core rulebook, Force Grip inflicted wound damage unless the target made a Fortitude save. Does "physical damage" mean "wound damage?"

A: No. "Physical," in the *Star Wars* rules, is the opposite of "energy." So that note is telling you that the damage from Force Grip can't be dissipated by Dissipate Energy, for example.

Q: A player in my game has the Drain Energy skill, and he wants to use it on everything. Weapons, droids, vehicles, starships -- everything! Can he do that?

A: The upper limit on size is noted in the skill description, but it might have escaped your notice. Any sort of power source larger than an E-web repeating blaster of a Medium-sized droid is too large to be drained by this skill.

Q: The players in my campaign don't understand why Drain Energy is a dark side skill, and, I confess, I don't either. They want their Jedi to be able to use it without getting Dark Side Points, and I really can't come up with a good reason why they couldn't.

A: Drain Energy is a dark side skill because it was based on a scene from Kevin J. Anderson's *Dark Apprentice*. On page 338 of that book, Kyp Durrón drains the energy from Luke Skywalker's lightsaber, using an effect that speaks of a "wave of dark ripples," a "shadow" appearing at the core of the blade, and "a black taint." To us, that said "dark side." Now, that might not have been Kevin Anderson's intention, but since no other character in the *Star Wars* novels have used that power, Anderson's text is the only information we have on this ability.



Q: Shouldn't Fear have a saving throw?

A: Fear already has a way of avoiding the effects: taking a Dark Side Point. The skill is meant to simulate the effect that the Emperor's goading had on Luke at the end of *Return of the Jedi*: preying upon Luke's fear and hatred in hopes of turning him to the dark side.

Some people are apparently daunted by the range of penalties that Fear can provide, and, true, a -10 to skill checks and attack rolls is kind of scary. But since that requires a result of 30 or more on the skill check, that takes at least a +10 skill modifier and a really good roll, or a +20 skill modifier and an average roll -- neither of which is particularly easy. Of course, someone using Fear could spend a Force Point to ensure a high roll, but look at that from a personal perspective: Would *you* spend a Force Point and take a Dark Side Point to give someone a penalty that they could then erase simply by accepting a Dark Side Point? Or rather, would you do it more than once?

Q: How long does the effect of Fear last?

A: This might be part of why some players are so put off by Fear; it doesn't seem to have a duration. The answer, though, is that it lasts for 10 rounds or until the target takes a Dark Side Point to negate the effect. (Taking the DSP is a free action, by the way.)

Q: The table for Force Light (in the [Power of the Jedi Sourcebook](#)) seems off. Isn't a DC 5 Will save way too low? And isn't a 41+ skill check result way too high?

A: Well, the headers are a bit off (the second column should read "Will Save for Character/Creature," the third column should read "Damage to Dark Side Spirit," and the last column should read "Effect on Dark Side Site").

But the idea behind the low Will save is to keep it from being easy for a character to "blow off" Dark Side Points by having a friend use Force Light to burn them off; a low save makes this trick more difficult. As for the skill check result, it's intentionally high to make sure that it takes a lot of effort (in the form of a Force Point) to reduce the power of a dark side site or to destroy a dark side spirit with a single skill check.

Q: The *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook* implies that a Force warrior can become a Jedi Knight without ever having been a Jedi! Is this really possible?

A: Well, no. The "Jedi Knight" special ability of the Force warrior implies that the character needs at least one level of a Jedi class, but it doesn't actually say that in so many words.

Q: In the revised core rulebook, the deflect (extend) ability can be used to grant the defense bonus to others, if they're close enough. Could four 6th-level Jedi guardians group together in a square cluster -- so that they could each reach one another -- and thus each get another +3 dodge bonus to defense from the cumulative deflect (extend) abilities? I mean, that's a +4 bonus to *each* of them just from that ability, on top of the +5 Defense bonus they gain from class and level, and that doesn't account for their Dexterity modifiers! And what if they each have the Dodge and Lightsaber Defense feat, as well? Wouldn't that raise the cumulative bonus to +16? Isn't that a bit much for characters who are only 6th level?

A: It's true that each of the Jedi in an arrangement like this would gain a +4 bonus from the deflect ability: +1 for their own deflect ability and +1 for each other Jedi guardian in the group. But the bonuses from Dodge and Lightsaber Defense are personal; the other Jedi don't benefit from those parts of the bonus. (If it helps to clarify it in your mind, think of the shared bonus type as a "*deflect* dodge" bonus.)

Even with that limitation, though, the bonus seems to climb pretty quickly: The same group of Jedi guardians at 13th level gets a +12 bonus from the deflect ability. Remember, though, that they each have to forego a move action in the next round, and when they *do* move, they have to remain in that tight cluster if they want to continue getting the bonus.

Do you have a rules question about the Star Wars Roleplaying Game? Send it to the [Jedi counselor](#), and then check back here every other week for the latest batch of answers.

Jedi Counseling 2: AT-ATs

[JD Wiker](#)

[Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker is back with more answers to the rules questions that keep you awake at night. Whether you're a player or a Gamemaster, you're sure to learn something you didn't know that will make your *Star Wars* campaign even better! This month's column answers player questions about the damage of ion cannons, bacta tanks, mastercrafted lightsabers, spending Force Points on initiative rolls, how long it'd take someone armed with a blaster to destroy an AT-AT, and more!



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: The new starship combat rules in the [revised core rulebook](#) left out the actual effect of ion damage. It gives a small chart to tell you the level of ion damage but not the exact effect. So how much damage do ion cannons cause?

A: Light ion cannons deal 3d10x2 damage; a standard ion cannon deals 5d10x2 damage; and a heavy ion cannon deals 8d10x2 damage.

Q: We're a bit confused about the blast radius of grenades. When using miniatures on a Battlemat, how do you determine the grenade's blast radius? Considering the grenade has a blast radius of 4 meters (2 squares by 2 squares), should we count from the corner or the center of a square?

A: Calculate the blast radius from one corner of the target square.

Q: Starship stunts are listed as free actions -- of which you can perform as many as you like during your action. So does that mean you can perform an unlimited number of starship stunts during your action?

A: You may have missed the little note at the top of page 219 about performing stunts: "A pilot can perform only one stunt per move action." So you could get at best two stunts in a single round -- unless you have the Heroic Surge feat, in which case you could get one more.



Q: Avoiding a hazard is considered a stunt also. Does that mean you can avoid only one hazard for each move action?

A: Avoiding a hazard doesn't require an action; it's more of a reaction than anything else. So, you can avoid as many hazards in a single move as your ship passes through.

Q: I'd really like my [Jedi guardian](#) to have a mastercrafted lightsaber. Can a Jedi make one?

A: Not unless he has sufficient levels in the tech specialist class as well. Of course, if your Gamemaster allows it, a tech specialist could mastercraft the basic components for you, and your Jedi would simply have to prepare the crystals. In either case, assume that the various parts that go into creating a lightsaber cost 500 credits, not including the crystals.

Q: I have some questions about the Force skill Friendship. Can Friendship be used on an opponent in combat? If so, what's the effect -- does the opponent just stop attacking?

A: Yes, Friendship can be used in that way. The effect depends on the new attitude. An unfriendly character would certainly continue attacking but might be less inclined to take advantage of weaker opponents. An opponent would stop attacking if his attitude were changed to "friendly" or "helpful."

Q: I assume the effect would be canceled if the Jedi attacks the target. What about if another party member attacks him?

A: Yes, any party member attacking the "befriended" character would count as "a situation occurring to alter that state."

Q: According to the Equipment chapter, a bacta tank holds 300 liters of bacta. But the rules don't say how often you have to replace the bacta. Is there a rule for how long the bacta lasts?

A: Good question! For simplicity, a liter of bacta is good for one hour of treatment. So, healing 3 vitality points consumes one liter of bacta, as does healing 1 wound point.

Q: What is the intent for Improved Force Mind's prerequisites? The revised core rulebook does not explicitly say that Force Mind is a prerequisite for Improved Force Mind, but whenever the indented summary of feats appears, the Improved Force Mind seems to be indented below the Force Mind feat. To me, this implies that Force Mind is a prerequisite for Improved Force Mind. Can you tell me for sure?

A: Yes, Force Mind should be a prerequisite of Improved Force Mind. Sounds like one for the errata!

Q: Under Starship Combat, an attack run is a simple maneuver. Ram attacks are a part of an attack run. Under Vehicle Combat, an attack run is a stunt. A ram attack is a separate simple maneuver. Which one is correct?

A: They're both correct. The two rules work differently because the effects of "terrain" are different between space combat and ground combat. Consider: If a ground vehicle traveling in a more or less straight line fails a Pilot check, the vehicle can, at the very least, interact with the ground -- the effects of which are detailed in the rules for losing control of a vehicle. Thus, you have to call for a Pilot check to determine whether that happens, and that makes it a stunt.

But what happens when a space vessel, traveling in a more or less straight line with no particular obstacles, fails a Pilot check? Not much, aside from perhaps plowing into an obstacle -- which is covered by the Avoid Hazard rules. Therefore, you don't have to call for a Pilot check unless the vessel deliberately passes through an obstacle, and so, it's a simple maneuver.

Q: I noticed that the rules for spending a Force Point say you can spend one on any d20 roll. Well, the initiative roll is a d20 roll. Can I spend a Force Point on my initiative roll? And do I lose the bonus after the first round ends? Do I get to apply the effects of the Force Point on all my d20 rolls during the first round?

A: Yes, you can use a Force Point on initiative, but it's really a waste of a Force Point, unless you really, really want to act first on the first round. Your initiative doesn't change after the first round, though, any more than it would change how many points of damage you restored if you used a Force Point on a Heal Another check. The effects of the Force Point would last through your first round of actions, applying to any d20 rolls you make until your first action in the second round.

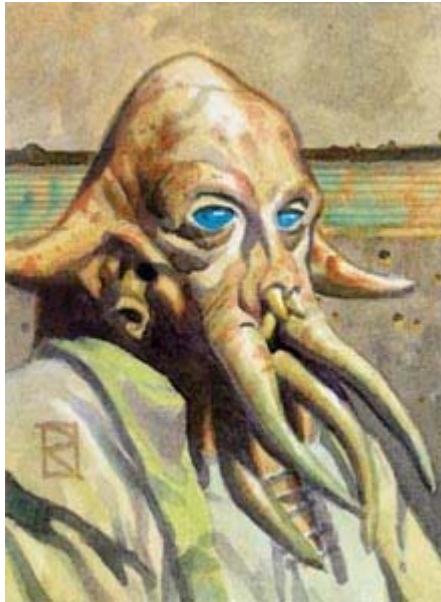


Q: In the revised core rulebook, Quarrens lack low-light vision. Why is this? The other amphibious species (Mon Calamari and Gungans) get it as a species trait, and the Quarrens have it in [Alien Anthology](#). Is it an error?

A: I checked with the other designers, and it seems to be an error in the species entry. We'll add that to the errata.

Q: How do poison attacks from creatures work with vitality? If a poison attack hits vitality, do you roll the poison results? Or do you roll only if it hits wounds?

A: The rules on poison (in the first paragraph on the top of page 290 of the revised core rulebook) state that a character makes a Fortitude saving throw when he suffers wound damage from an attack with a poisoned weapon. This rule extends to venomous animals, as well.



Q: Why is the AT-AT's damage reduction so low? A character armed only with a blaster pistol can shoot holes in it!

A: An AT-AT has a DR of 15, meaning that an attack must cause 16 points of damage to do more than just scorch the paint. A blaster pistol deals 3d6 damage. With an upper limit of 18 points of damage, your observation seems to hold water.

But you're not taking probabilities into account. Even though the range of a blaster pistol's damage is 3 to 18, it doesn't hit all of those numbers equally. Totals of 10 and 11 occur a heck of a lot more than a total of 3 or 18, for example. Looking at how many combinations tally up to 16, 17, or 18, we have only 10 ways of coming up with that total -- as compared to 206 combinations that total up to the rest of the possibilities. That means that just under 5% of all 3d6 rolls come up 16, 17, or 18. In other words, fewer than 5% of all blaster pistol shots against an AT-AT are going to inflict any damage at all. Assuming that a character gets one hit on an AT-AT each round, and that only once in every twenty rounds does his blaster pistol do enough damage to scratch the AT-AT, and that he gets an average roll (16.5 points of damage, based on how often each combination occurs), it's going to take that character 2,400 rounds -- four hours -- to destroy the AT-AT. I'd say DR 15 is sufficient.

Q: I've got the [Power of the Jedi Sourcebook](#), and I'm thinking I might want to play a Tchuukthai Jedi. But I can't figure out which species in the illustrations are which! Can you provide some kind of guide?

A: Sure thing, and I'm sorry we didn't think to provide captions. The illustration on page 66 features, from left to right, an Anx, a Cathar, and a Khommite. On page 67, the aliens are an Arkanian, a Celegian, a Caamasi, and a Draethos (as shown in the image to the right). On page 69 is pictured a Myneyrsh, a Lannik, and a Nazzar. Page 70 features the Tchuukthai, a Krevaaiki, a Kushiban (on the pedestal), and a Miraluka. The illustration on page 71 shows a Sarkan teacher (in the pit on the right) talking about holograms of (from left to right) a Tsil, a Neti, and a Tirrith.



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Jedi Counseling 3: NJO Ships

[*JD Wiker*](#)

Your own personal Yoda returns with another batch of wisdom for the faithful! In this installment of "Jedi Counseling," [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker answers player questions about using feats in starship combat, bringing Yuuzhan Vong armor and thud bugs in line with the new rules, the Sense Surroundings Force technique, converting ships from [The New Jedi Order Sourcebook](#) to the new rules, how long it takes to run around inside your ship, and more!



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: I don't understand how to repair damage to starship shields. In the Battle Damage chart on page 216 of the [revised core rulebook](#), the table gives rules for hull damage sufficient to damage shield generators. However, what happens when the shields are reduced to zero, but the damage is not sufficient to damage the hull? Are the generators damaged, ionized, or what?

A: The shields are simply reduced to zero, but as long as the engines are still functioning, the shields begin recharging, automatically, right away, as per the rules just below Table 11-9. If you're in a hurry, though, a member of the crew can restore depleted shield points as a move action, as explained in the "Heroes as Crew" rules on page 225.

Q: If I'm the pilot of a YT-1300 freighter and I want to reroute power, can I do that from the cockpit? If not, how long does it take to get to the engines or wherever I need to go to do that?

A: I've always ruled that in a starfighter, the pilot in the cockpit has access to controls for all of the ship's "stations." That is, he can pilot the ship, operate the guns, shields, and sensors, or reroute power -- all from the cockpit. If the pilot wants to jury-rig a repair, the GM has to decide whether the pilot can do it from the cockpit based on the type of repair.

On a space transport, only the piloting controls, sensors, and shield controls are in the cockpit. If a character in the cockpit wants to operate the guns, jury-rig a repair, or reroute power, it takes him a full-round action to bolt back to the appropriate station. By the same token, it takes a full-round action to go from any of those stations to any of the other stations -- including returning to the cockpit.

The bridge of a capital ship is a different story. There is a post for every station, but in the case of gunnery, engineering, and shields, the actual work is done somewhere else aboard the ship. A character who leaves the bridge for one of these other stations, or who moves from station to station aboard the ship (again, including returning to the bridge) spends at least 5 rounds -- and on some ships, as much as a full minute -- getting there. Further, moving between posts on the bridge requires a move action; they're just not that close together, in most cases.

Q: My Jedi character wields two lightsabers. He just recently became a Jedi Knight and selected the Lightsaber Defense Feat. Does he get the +2 dodge bonus twice, one for each blade?

A: No. The feat doesn't provide a dodge bonus for each lightsaber the character wields. In that regard, one lightsaber is no different than four.

Q: After a ship takes ion damage in combat, how soon can the crew attempt a Repair roll to get rid of the penalty? And is it a move action, a full-round action, or what?

A: The crew can attempt to repair the ion damage as soon as their turn comes up in the initiative order again. The Repair check takes one full round.

Q: I'm glad to see that the revised core rulebook treats armor as Damage Reduction. But I have *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the Yuuzhan Vong armor in there already has Damage Reduction. How do I convert that armor to the new rules? And the same goes for the dark armor in *The Dark Side Sourcebook* -- and the orbalisk armor, too.

A: For Yuuzhan Vong armor, use the DR listed in *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and add +1 to the DR for each full three points of defense bonus provided by the armor. As for dark armor, note that Table 4-2 in *The Dark Side Sourcebook* states that the Damage Reduction effects of dark armor aren't cumulative with other DR. You'd take the better of the two, which would almost always be the dark armor's DR. So, for example, if you had a suit of medium battle armor given the best possible Damage Reduction by Sith alchemy, it would provide DR 10 -- but not DR 15, since the Damage Reduction isn't cumulative. For orbalisk armor, simply convert the Defense Bonus provided by the armor into Damage Reduction.

Q: Yuuzhan Vong thud bugs don't work under the new rules when it comes to deflecting them. They have a DC for a saving throw, but it says they can be deflected with a lightsaber, which requires an attack roll.

A: Use the following revised text, which makes it possible for Jedi to use their deflect ability against a thud bug.

Thud Bug

Cost: Not available for sale	Stun/Fort DC: --
Damage: 2d6 plus special	Type: Bludgeoning
Critical: 20	Multifire/Autofire: --
Range Increment: --	Size: Tiny
Weight: 0.5 kg	Group: Simple

Thud bugs are nasty little bioengineered weapons that, when released, fly toward the nearest enemy at a speed of 10 meters (perfect maneuverability). A thud bug provides a +5 equipment bonus on the hurler's ranged attack bonus and deals 2d6 points of bludgeoning damage with a successful hit. Furthermore, a struck target must succeed at a Strength check (DC 15) or be knocked prone. The thud bug continues to attack each round until it hits the target, it is destroyed, or the target falls prone, at which point the thud bug becomes dormant. Attacks after the first are treated as melee attacks, made by the thud bug itself. An activated or dormant thud bug has no vitality points or hardness, 1 wound point, a +5 melee attack bonus, no effective ranged attacks, and Defense 19 (+5 Dex, +4 size).

Q: Exactly what feats can a player utilize in starship combat? If I am to take the game literally, it appears as though Starship Dodge, Starship Operations, Rapid Shot, and the appropriate skill-enhancing feats are the only feats specifically mentioned as having an effect on starship combat. If a feat isn't specifically mentioned, can it be used? For example, can players use Combat Expertise (to increase starship Defense), Heroic Surge, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot (to shoot into a dogfight), or Shot on the Run? What about the Force Feats?

A: You should take some time to re-read the feat descriptions a bit more literally. Combat Expertise states that the bonus applies when you make an attack action or full attack action *in melee*. So, no, it doesn't apply. Heroic Surge simply lets a character make another move or attack, but has no other restrictions, so it *does* apply. The same goes for Improved Initiative.

Point Blank Shot, on the other hand, says that the target has to be within 10 meters. If two ships are that close to each other in starship combat, then sure, you could get the bonus. Precise Shot talks about opponents engaged *in melee*, just like Combat Expertise.

Shot on the Run is perhaps the only one that isn't clear about whether it means *personal* ranged weapons or *any* ranged weapons. But it does, in fact, refer to personal ranged weapons, and therefore doesn't apply in starship combat.

Q: Thanks for the [conversion](#) of starship speeds from all the old sourcebooks to the new starship rules. But I think you missed one. I didn't see any of the ships from *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*.

A: Oops! You're right. Here's the ship data you need from that book:

Vessel	Speed Category	Space Squares/Action	Overall	Atmospheric Squares/Action	Missile Quality
Starfighters					
XJ X-wing Fighter	Ramming	9	1,150 km/h	18	Ordinary (+10)
XJ-3 X-wing Fighter	Ramming	10	1,100 km/h	18	Ordinary (+10)
Yorik-et Coralskipper	Ramming	9	1,100 km/h	18	-
Space Transports					
Blunt Force	Cruising	4	650 km/h	11	Marginal (+5)
Jade Shadow	Attack	8	1,000 km/h	15	Ordinary (+10)
Yorik-trema Transport	Attack	8	1,000 km/h	15	-
Yorik-vec Assault Cruiser	Attack	8	1,080 km/h	18	-
Wanderhome	Cruising (-2)	3	650 km/h	11	-
Capital Ships					
A-vek Iiluunu Fighter Carrier	Cruising	4	-	-	-
Chuun M'arh Frigate	Attack	6	-	-	-
Errant Venture	Attack	6	-	-	-
I'friil Ma-Nat Corvette	Attack	7	780 km/h	13	-
Miid Ro'ik Warship	Cruising	4	-	-	-
Queen of Empire	Cruising (-2)	3	-	-	-
Sh'rip Sh'pa Spawn Ship	Cruising	3	-	-	-
Sunulok	Cruising (-4)	2	-	-	-
Suuv Ban D'krid Cruiser	Cruising	4	-	-	-
Uro-ik V'alh Battleship	Cruising (-2)	3	-	-	-
Uumufalh Gunship	Cruising	4	-	-	-
Vigor	Attack	6	1,000 km/h	17	-
Vua-spar Interdictor	Cruising (-4)	2	-	-	-
Yorik-stronha Spy Ship	Cruising	4	-	-	-

Q: Does Force Mastery allow you to reduce the move-equivalent action penalty from Deflect to a free action?

A: It doesn't apply. While Deflect costs the Jedi a move action, that "cost" is merely a limitation on your future actions.

Q: I'm playing a Miraluka Jedi from the [Power of the Jedi Sourcebook](#), and there's something I don't understand. How long does the Sense Surroundings Force technique last?

A: It normally lasts 10 rounds, but it's effectively an indefinite period for Miraluka, since they don't pay a vitality

cost to activate it.

Q: What's the maximum range for Sense Surroundings? And can it "see through" walls?

A: It's pretty much the same as the range for normal sight, with the same -1 penalty for every 4 meters between you and what you are trying to "see." Yes, Sense Surroundings allows you to perceive through obstructions, since you are seeing through the Force.

Q: Does Sense Surroundings let you see in all directions at once?

A: "Direction" is a deceptive word in d20 games. There is no facing in combat. So, in a way, everyone sees in all directions in d20. Thus, no benefit is gained from Sense Surroundings other than the elimination of concealment, darkness, and blindness problems.

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Jedi Counseling 4: Friendship

[JD Wiker](#)

"Jedi Counseling" is back with more answers to the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* questions that keep you awake at night! In this fourth installment, read [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker's answers to questions about Shot on the Run, Friendship, Battle Influence, and why Force Light isn't a good way to cover up your dark side transgressions!



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Q: Does a failed disarm attempt on a character using a blaster provoke an attack of opportunity or not? Page 169 of the [revised core rulebook](#) describes how an attacker must attack the held blaster at 15 + Dex + Class bonus + size mod + possible +2 for the weapon being held two-handed (pg. 168). If this high DC isn't met, then "This kind of disarm attempt can provoke an attack of opportunity." Yet page 157 says, "You never get to make attacks of opportunity with ranged weapons, thrown weapons or heavy weapons". This seems to contradict page 169.

So, if I fail to disarm a goon with my lightsaber, does he get to blast me or not?

A: What that line on page 169 means is that if the character to be disarmed is also holding a melee weapon (or has the Martial Arts feat), he can attempt a melee attack as an attack of opportunity. The wording is a bit unclear, but it doesn't actually supercede the rule on page 157.

Q: Is it possible to use Force Strike against an opponent's weapon? It seems like you should be able to break weapons using Force Strike. In the campaign I play in, the GM doesn't use many droids, so we don't end up fighting them very often. Without droids to fight, Force Strike loses some of its utility -- particularly if we're trying to avoid gaining Dark Side Points by using the skill on living opponents.

A: Yes, you can use Force Strike on weapons and other items. The item in question would get a saving throw, which, in the case of weapons, would be the same as the wielder (as per the rules on saving throws for objects). As per the rules on attacking items, the item doesn't get a save if it's unattended, so it just takes the 3d4 damage.

Q: There's something a bit odd about the feat Shot on the Run. According to the text, "moving in this way does not provoke an attack of opportunity from the defender you're attacking." Does that mean that I can stand next to a droid with a vibro axe, for example, back up so I'm out of its threatened squares, fire at it, then move back so I'm adjacent to it again -- all without provoking an attack of opportunity?

A: No. Shot on the Run seems to have some inadvertent and excess verbiage, and the last sentence of the feat will be dropped in a forthcoming errata.

Q: We've been wondering about the effects of ionization on starships. We know how much damage different types of ion cannons do, but in Table 11-11 on page 217 of the core rulebook, it lists different levels of ionization damage. So what's the difference between, say, a Minor and a Major Ionization?

A: "Superficial," "Minor," "System," "Major," and "Catastrophic" are all just descriptive text. The difference in effect is reflected in the Repair check DC.

Q: Do navigation computers come standard in hyperspace-capable starships, or do you have to buy them for an additional cost?

A: Every hyperdrive comes with a basic navigation computer.

Q: On page 22 of the [Arms & Equipment Guide](#), the Kelvarek Consolidated Arms Dissuader KD-30 states that it initially does 1d10 damage and then 1d4 each round after for 3 rounds or until washed off. I'm confused: Is the damage 1d10 only until the shooter gets through vitality and hit wounds for the acid damage to work? Or does the acid splash on them when they have vitality, therefore doing the extra damage even when they still have vitality?

A: Technically speaking, the ammunition should not deal additional damage unless it initially inflicted wound damage.

Q: Can the elite trooper's Deadly Strike ability be used for someone who has the Martial Arts, Improved Martial Arts, and Advanced Martial Arts feats (with a full threat range of 18-20) to give them a doubled threat range? And if so, what does the new threat range work out to?

A: Yes, that would work. The new threat range would be 15-20.

Q: For the purposes of qualifying for a prestige class with a Reputation requirement, do the Fame/Infamy feats count as part of the Reputation, or do you just look at the "base" Reputation?

A: Fame and Infamy both count, since they increase the Reputation bonus.

Q: My players have taken to using the Force skill Friendship to get them out of any problem they might be involved in. Are we using it right? If so, it seems too powerful. For example, Darth Maul could jump a Jedi, and the Jedi could just use Friendship to calm Maul down, take his lightsaber away, and order the Sith Lord to lead the Jedi to Maul's secret master. Friendship seems pretty broken, if you can have a Sith Lord like Maul licking your boot without a save.

A: Hm. Although Friendship requires a full-round action to use (meaning Darth Maul would have plenty of time to attack or leave the area), and "licking your boot" is something that a character like Maul would consider "a situation that alters that state," we've also been thinking that Friendship could stand a saving throw mechanism.

So consider this errata:

Check: The result of a Friendship check sets the DC for the target's Will save.

Result Will Saving Throw DC

Up to 4	5
5-14	10
15-24	15
25-34	20
35+	25"

But also remember that while a Force-savvy character like Darth Maul might stop attacking the hero, he certainly isn't going to hang around, knowing that he can attempt a Will save once he's no longer in the hero's vicinity. And, in any case, not being around means he can't be made to lead his new "buddies" directly to Darth Sidious.

Finally, keep in mind that Friendship is not mind control. The user can issue instructions, but the target is under no particular compulsion to follow them; he just doesn't react with violence to being ordered around.

Q: The skill Battle Influence doesn't seem to do anything useful. Unless your targets fail their saves by 10 or

more, they can still attack you -- and if you attack them back, the effect ends. Am I misreading this skill?

A: Battle Influence is designed to get opponents to fight each other, not to make it easier for you to kill them. So, if you attack someone under the effects of your Battle Influence, and they know it's you, then the effect ends on that person. The same thing happens if someone who is apparently one of your allies attacks the influenced character. If you want to continue attacking opponents under the effects of Battle Influence, make sure they have no idea it's you that's attacking them, either by using concealment, or by attacking through the Force.

Q: How long does a Survival check take when following tracks with the Track feat? I believe you can take 20 for this, so I need to know how long that will take.

A: That seems to be an omission in the feat description. Assume that each check to Track takes one minute, so taking 20 on the check takes 20 minutes.

Q: Does using the prolong Force ability provided by the Control feat cause the Force-user to become fatigued?

A: He'd still become fatigued. Whenever you lose wound points, you're risking fatigue. This is part of the reason why the prolong Force feat was changed to an ability of Control with the revised core rulebook. It wasn't very useful previously -- certainly not useful enough to be worth a feat slot.

Q: If a character becomes entangled with the Plant Surge skill, is that character considered helpless?

A: No. The effects of Plant Surge don't fulfill any of the conditions listed in the definition of "helpless."

Q: Can Force Light be used to leech Dark Side Points from willing participants? For example, could two Jedi use the skill on each other to drain any Dark Side Points that they have? I know that you can't voluntarily fail the saving throw, but since you always fail on a natural 1, the players could, during their downtime, use the skill over and over, until they'd rolled enough automatic failures to wipe away all of their Dark Side Points. Obviously, this is a blatant exploitation of the rules, but the rules *do* seem to allow it.

A: True, the rules do allow it, but as GM, I would only allow those two Jedi to do it once. Using it more often indicates that they have no real desire not to do evil; they've just found a convenient way to cover their transgressions. So, after the first time, I'd rule that the character using Force Light for this purpose gets a Dark Side Point, rather like the common transgression of performing a questionably evil act -- in this case, being an accomplice after the fact.

Do you have a rules question about the Star Wars Roleplaying Game? Send it to the [Jedi counselor](#), and then check back here every other week for the latest batch of answers!

Jedi Counseling 5: Lightsaber Fumbles

[JD Wiker](#)

Confused about combat? Daunted by damage? Befuddled by the Force? JD Wiker is back to answer your questions about the [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling." This time around, you'll get answers to your questions about combat gloves, prolong Force, and putting your eye out with a lightsaber!



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: How do you figure out a ship's crew rating? Is it based on Pilot skill for all fields -- i.e., Initiative, Maneuver, Attack bonus, etc.? Or is each one based on different modifiers, such as Dexterity modifiers and the like?

A: "Crew rating" is meant to be a catch-all term for all of an NPC crew's functions. When the ship is crewed by characters, use the characters' stats to determine what the totals are. If it helps, think of it as filling in your character sheet, with the added modifier of the ship's equipment applying, in some places.

Q: The manual clearly says that characters not trained to use a lightsaber risk injury if they try to do it anyway. Yet, there is no information about how that works! One of my players is a non-Jedi who picked up a lightsaber after his team defeated a Sith Lord. Now he wants to use it. I know he must use it at -4, but shouldn't he risk injuring himself? For example, if he misses, should he roll against his own defense and risk doing the damage to himself?

A: Such rules *shouldn't* be any more necessary than rules for injuring oneself with a blaster. That text ("They are as likely to injure themselves as harm their opponents.") isn't meant to be rules text; it's "flavor" text. The game doesn't have rules for "fumbles," because it's no fun to accidentally kill your character in the middle of an important battle -- and it's even less fun to do it in an unimportant battle!

Still, if you want something to discourage the player from using the lightsaber, here's a simple suggestion. If a character who is not proficient with a lightsaber rolls a natural 1 on his attack -- which is an automatic miss, regardless -- have the player make a second roll to "confirm the fumble." If he rolls a natural 1 again, he inflicts 1d4 points of wound damage to himself from brushing the blade against his flesh. But since a pair of natural 1s is a 400-to-1 chance, feel free to warn him of the danger he's in by describing how his wild swing slashes through a power conduit on the wall, or comes perilously close to puncturing the starship portal, or nearly clips a nearby ally.

Q: What are the penalties or consequences with regard to a solid projectile (like a slug from a slugthrower) fired at a lightsaber-wielding character? Would the projectile disintegrate within the blade, or depending on the speed, could it pass through to cause damage, especially with regard to arrows, bullets, and other, more primitive projectile weapons?

A: A lightsaber can deflect a bullet or other object just as easily as it deflects a blaster shot. If you define this as the bullet (or other projectile) burning up on contact with the blade, that's fine. But "deflected" means "no damage carries through to the lightsaber wielder," so it shouldn't pass through the blade to inflict any damage on the person wielding the lightsaber.

Q: Is there any armor that a Wookiee can wear without having to modify it first?

A: I imagine that Wookiees make such armor on Kashyyyk all the time. And considering that Wookiees are considered Medium-size (despite their great height), any of the armor in the *Star Wars*



Roleplaying Game [core rulebook](#) would fit (though I'd probably rule that stormtrooper armor would be a bit too small).

Q: How do combat gloves work in the core rulebook? Are you considered armed? That is, do you provoke an attack of opportunity when you attack while wearing combat gloves? Do you get to make attacks of opportunity?

A: No, you're not considered armed just for wearing combat gloves. So you would still provoke attacks of opportunity for making unarmed attacks, and you wouldn't be able to make attacks of opportunity unless you had some other melee weapon readied.

Q: Is the threat range of a character with Martial Arts wearing combat gloves 19-20 or just 20?

A: Combat gloves just change the damage dealt; they don't affect the wearer's threat range with unarmed attacks.

Q: Does using the prolong Force ability provided by the Control feat cause the Force user to become fatigued? After all, this loss of wound points is not actually taking damage -- you're just powering an ability.

A: You'd still become fatigued. The game doesn't make the distinction that voluntarily giving up wound points is an "exempt cost" for the purposes of becoming fatigued or making the Fortitude save to avoid becoming knocked out.

Do you have a rules question about the Star Wars Roleplaying Game? Send it to the [Jedi counselor](#), and then check back here every other week for the latest batch of answers!

Jedi Counseling 6: Shipbuilding

[*JD Wiker*](#)

The Force is strong with you, but you still have questions. In this installment of "Jedi Counseling," [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker gives answers to your questions about deflecting blasters, crafting starships, and taking wound damage.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: Do a Jedi character's prestige classes improve a Jedi's Deflect (defense) and Deflect (attack) abilities? If so, how?

A: Both versions of Deflect simply get one step better each time they occur. So if you raised your Deflect (defense) bonus to +3 as a Jedi guardian and then became a Jedi master, your Deflect (defense) bonus would rise to +4 when you reached 5th-level master.

The same is true, in reverse, for Deflect (attack). You start at the base penalty of -4, and then each time you pick up the Deflect (attack) ability, the penalty reduces by 1.

Q: In the [revised core rulebook](#), I noticed that in the section describing the craft skill, there is a Craft (starfighter), Craft (space transport), and Craft (capital ship). I understand that, but there's also Craft (hyperdrives) and Craft (starship weapons). To create a textbook starship (one with a hyperdrive and weapons), would you need to make separate Craft (hyperdrives), Craft (starship weapons) and Craft (starship of choice) attempts, or would the starship craft entail all that (the hyperdrive and weapons being included in the raw materials)?

A: Craft (starfighter), Craft (space transport), and Craft (capital ship) all allow you to build the complete ship, include hyperdrive and weapons.

But if you want to build a faster hyperdrive to install in your existing starship, simply having Craft (appropriate starship) won't do the trick; you need Craft (hyperdrive). The same goes for Craft (starship weapons).

Q: [Starships of the Galaxy](#) has a number of tables explaining how to pay for constructing a starship. But what do I do if I just want to upgrade my hyperdrive? There's no price -- only construction points. I can't use the "Base Price" table to check for the costs, or most of the possible starship modifications would cost 50,000 credits, because most of them fall in the "10 construction points or less" category. So, how much does it cost to modify some of a ship's core systems?

A: The easiest way to do this is to calculate the construction points between the existing ship and the existing ship if it were equipped with the new hyperdrive. Use the difference in base price to calculate how much the modification costs.

Q: In [Starships of the Galaxy](#), Knowledge (spacer lore) plays a vital role in a large number of tasks, such as navigating through a radiation field. In the revised core rulebook, it was taken out, and no GM characters had the skill -- not even Han Solo or the generic starfighter ace who previously had the highest modifiers in the skill. Instead, they had Knowledge (world lore). Does this take the place of spacer lore and should it be used in its place?

A: Knowledge (world lore) replaced Knowledge (spacer lore), yes.

Q: I had a question about the listing for the weapons on the Baktoid Armor Workshop AAT-1 in the core rulebook. According to this listing, the AAT only comes with one weapon, the Heavy Laser Cannon. But the *Star Wars Episode I Incredible Cross-Sections Book* shows that the AAT has twin lateral range-finding lasers, twin lateral anti-personnel lasers, and six energy shell projectile launchers. Are there rules for including these weapons on the AAT?

A: Yes, in the [Secrets of Naboo sourcebook](#). Somehow that information got deleted from the entry when it was ported over to the revised core rulebook. The rest of the entry should look like this:

Weapon: Light repeating laser cannons (4 front-mounted, 1 to either side of the laser cannon, and 2 below the cockpit); **Fire Arc:** Front; **Attack Bonus:** +2 (-2 size, +2 crew, +2 fire control); **Damage:** 1d10x4; **Range:** 100m.

Weapon: Shell launchers (6 front-mounted); **Fire Arc:** Front; **Attack Bonus:** +0 (-2 size, +2 crew, +0 fire control); **Damage:** 3d10x6; **Range:** 100m.

Q: Can a Jedi opt to lower her defense score in order to be more easily hit by blaster bolts -- and thus, more likely to deflect them?

A: That seems reasonable. I'd rule that a Jedi can forego her class bonuses, her Dexterity bonus, and any dodge bonuses, individually or all together.

Q: Can a Jedi voluntarily take damage on his wound points, instead of letting it go to vitality first -- say, to take advantage of the Dissipate Energy feat?

A: That also seems reasonable, but if you run out of wound points (perhaps because you failed the Fortitude save for Dissipate Energy), you'd still fall unconscious. You wouldn't start taking vitality damage instead.

Do you have a rules question about the Star Wars Roleplaying Game? Send it to the [Jedi counselor](#), and then check back here every other week for the latest batch of answers!

Jedi Counseling 7: Carbonite Freezing

[JD Wiker](#)

Hmmm . . . difficult to see, the answers are. The dark side clouds everything! With this installment of "Jedi Counseling," [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker answers your questions regarding Sense Surroundings, flame projectors, and being frozen in carbonite!



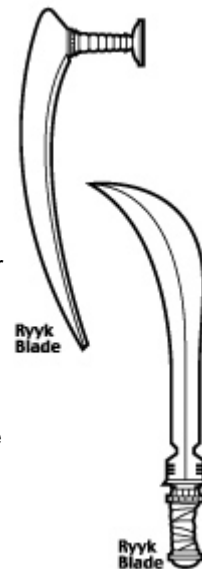
Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: Can the Sense Surroundings ability of the Sense feat (found in the [Power of the Jedi Sourcebook](#)) allow the Jedi to get a clear picture of their area without line of sight? That is, can you see through walls, or things that people are hiding behind?

A: Basically, yes. You can use it to tell where people are in an area. It's not perfect -- it won't tell you what the person is carrying, or even necessarily what species the person is. But you'd get broad impressions like "someone Large is hiding behind that crate" or "several people are lurking in the shadows around us."

Q: The rryk blade in the new [Arms & Equipment Guide](#) is a bit different than the one that was in *Star Wars Gamer*. It seems like the old one made more sense, though, considering that it was based on *The Essential Guide to Weapons*. Why is the rryk blade now a small weapon? It's the size of a machete. And why did the weight change?

A: Between *Star Wars Gamer* #4 and the *Arms & Equipment Guide*, we gave a lot of thought to the rryk blade, and we realized that it was way out of proportion with the weights of other, similar weapons. A longsword, for example, is only 2 kilograms. So, it made sense to lower the weight. Then, the illustration in *The Essential Guide to Weapons* shows a Wookiee wielding one in either hand. So, to make that a little easier for a Wookiee character to pull off, the designers of the *A&EG* decided to make rryk blades Small weapons, meaning that a Wookiee will get the bonus for the off-hand weapon being light.



Q: If you use the skills Battlemind and Enhance Ability (boosting your Dexterity) at the same time, it's going to give you a lot of bonuses. If you have a 7th-level Jedi, he can roll a 20-24 on average, getting +4, and Battlemind gives him at least another +3. So, just in the space of one round, he already has a +7 bonus to attacks! Isn't that a bit much for just a few skills, considering he still can move in that round?

A: Battlemind costs a move action, and Enhance Ability costs an attack action, so the character isn't going to have any actions left for the round he activates them. As for gaining a +7 attack bonus, that's actually only a +5 bonus; the +4 Enhance Ability boosts the ability, not the ability modifier. In any case, using both those skills is costing him vitality points that he might be sorely missing in a few rounds. His defense, on the other hand, only goes up by +4, since Battlemind only applies to attacks.

Q: When a Jedi uses Deflect (attack) on a blaster bolt, it can only hit a target one range increment away. Does this mean the initial range of the weapon, or can they return the bolt past that?

A: It means, simply, that the maximum distance the Jedi can redirect the blaster bolt is equal to the range increment of the weapon that fired it. So, a bolt from a blaster pistol can hit a target up to 10 meters away, while a bolt from a blaster rifle can hit a target up to 30 meters away.

Q: In the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, it seems that the XJ X-wing has been greatly toned down in capabilities. The +3 engine bonus it should get to maneuvers and all weapons appears only in its main blasters, and it is no faster than the standard X-wing. (I always assumed it was.) Is this correct?

A: There's a general assumption that it's faster, and it is indeed a little faster in atmosphere (in terms of kilometers per hour). However, the upgrades to the XJ are more to its weaponry than to its engines, which is why we chose not to upgrade its speed by comparison to the standard X-wing.

Q: In the *Arms & Equipment Guide*, the Flame Projectors are missing their Reflex save DC numbers (pages 35 and 36). The text above the flamers states that the Reflex saves vary with the weapon but the individual weapons don't have one listed in the stats.

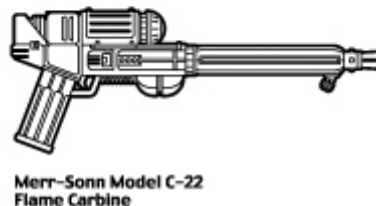
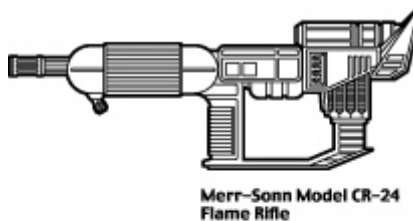
A: I checked with the original designers, and it seems that the DCs were accidentally omitted. But here they are:

Czerka CZ Wrist-Mounted Flame Projector
Ref DC: 15

Merr-Sonn Model C-22 Flame Carbine
Ref DC: 13

Merr-Sonn Model CR-24/Czerka CZ-24
Ref DC: 15

Merr-Sonn Model CR-28/Czerka CZ-28
Ref DC: 18



Q: In the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the description of Jedi battle armor reads, "In an effort to protect themselves from the dark fury of their foes, the greatest Jedi armorers developed battle armor that was the best possible protection against a lightsaber blow." But lightsabers ignore the damage reduction of armor when dealing damage to an opponent. The description of Jedi battle armor, then, seems to be entirely inaccurate since lightsabers, in essence, make the damage-mitigating capability of armor null and void. One of my players is pressing that perhaps this particular suit of armor's DR should work against lightsabers, but I'm not so convinced. Can you help?

A: We've gotten this question quite a bit lately, and we've come to the conclusion that the original designer meant for the Jedi battle armor to resist lightsabers, as your player suggests, but that this simply didn't come across in the write-up. Consider this errata.

Q: Are there any rules for carbonite freezing? I'd like to use it in my campaign.

A: No official rules, no, but here's my suggestion. Upon being released from a block of carbonite, the character should be considered "exhausted" until he's had eight hours of rest, and he'll remain blinded for 1d4 days. It's probably not a good idea to call for a Fortitude check of some kind. (It just wouldn't be any fun for a player's character to undergo carbonite freezing in a dramatic moment, and then drop dead because of a bad Fortitude save!)

The stats for the frozen person wouldn't change, though they should probably be protected by the hardness of the carbonite block. As for that, I'd say that carbonite is probably hardness 10, with maybe 10 wound points per centimeter of thickness.

Q: In the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the Cathar are listed as a Small species. Under Defense, however, the species is not given the +1 size bonus. One of these must be a misprint, but which one?

A: The species' size is a misprint. Cathars are Medium-sized.

Q: If you use Illusion to create an image of a dark side user wielding a lightsaber, and you make it attack an opponent, what happens to the opponent? Aside from the check to see through the illusion, would he take some kind of damage if the "lightsaber" struck? Could it inflict a critical hit?

A: No and no. Remember, Illusion can't, in and of itself, cause physical harm. The target would see the attacker, but as soon as it "hit" him, he'd get a Will save to see if he realized that it was an illusion. And I'd personally give him a bonus, because all the evidence of his senses would be telling him he should be in tremendous pain, but he wouldn't feel any.

Q: Can I use Transfer Essence to transfer my essence into a droid?

A: Not normally, no. But as noted in the skill description, you can transfer your essence into a building in extreme cases. So, it's really up to your GM whether you could do something similar with non-living but animate objects, such as droids.

Q: Our group has been in a few starfighter battles recently. But none of the books list a Challenge Code for any of the ships. The prime example of this is the droid starfighters. Is there a Challenge Code system for starships, or would you just use the Challenge Code for the pilot or crew of the ship?

A: We thought about this quite a bit, and it would be nearly impossible to create a system based on the ships themselves. It's the pilot inside who makes the ship more dangerous. Use the Challenge Code of the pilot/crew to select suitable challenges for your players. If the ship had a particularly dangerous weapon, or an extremely high shield point total, you might consider upping the Challenge Code, just as you would if you give an NPC a particularly dangerous weapon, or armor with extremely high Damage Reduction.

Do you have a rules question about the Star Wars Roleplaying Game? Send it to the [Jedi counselor](#), and then check back here every other week for the latest batch of answers!

Jedi Counseling 8: One-Handed!

[JD Wiker](#)

The Jedi Counselor is back with more answers to your questions about the [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#). This time around, designer JD Wiker addresses questions about wielding lightsabers and rifles one-handed, restoring angled shields, converting dark trooper armor to revised core rulebook stats, how to get out of an electronet, and more!



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: When you use a Computer Use check to restore shields, but you've got them set to double-front (or double-rear), do you double the shield points you gain? So, if my ship had 50 shield points, and I put them to double-front for 100, and then took 30 points of damage on my front shield, they would be down to 70. If I then restored shield points, would I gain 20 shield points, or only 10?

A: No, you don't double them. "Double," as in "double-front," is just starfighter-jockey jargon for angling shields. It doesn't actually double the shield generator's output. So, in your example, the shields would go from 70 to 80, rather than to 90.

Q: I was wondering if you could please give me the new converted stats for all three dark trooper phases. For the most part, I want to know the change in defense from their armor and damage reduction. (I would also like the converted stats for the Coruscant guard armor.)

A: For dark trooper armor, I'd rule that Phase I armor provides DR 1, Phase II armor provides DR 4, and Phase III armor provides DR 5. For Coruscant guard armor, I'd suggest giving it DR 9.

Q: Lightsabers can apparently be wielded one-handed or two-handed, but does a lightsaber being wielded two-handed get the x 1.5 Strength modifier to damage?

A: Yes, that's correct.

Q: So when are we to assume that a lightsaber is being wielded one or two-handed? When the player says so? Because if the damage modifier gets multiplied by 1.5, why would anyone ever do anything else?

A: A player trying to do a lot of damage will use both hands. (Note that Jedi in the movies generally do.) A character might choose to use only one hand, though, if he needed the other hand to carry something, operate a control panel, or whatever.

Q: Can you fire a blaster rifle one-handed? It would seem that a penalty should apply, but we've seen Luke and Leia shoot the things one-handed and seem to get along all right. So, are rifle weapons one- or two-handed? And if they're two-handed, are there circumstances under which a hero can use them one-handed, like we see in the movies?

A: Rifles are technically two-handed weapons. It's hard to say, from watching the movies, if Luke or Leia ever actually hit anything while firing those carbines one-handed, though there are plenty of clear examples where they did so while holding the weapon with two hands. I'd probably apply a -4 penalty for a character using a rifle with only one hand.

Q: In the last fight I ran, the bad guy was equipped with a few electronets. As soon as he used one, though, the

first question the entangled player asked was: "How do I get disentangled?" We looked everywhere and couldn't find a rule for this. Did I miss it?

A: Hmm. I don't know how we missed including that information; as I recall, it was meant to work much like a net in *Dungeons & Dragons*. That is, the entangled creature can escape with an Escape Artist check (DC 20) as a full-round action. Or, alternately, the net has 5 wound points (if the entangled character has a Tiny cutting weapon to slice his way out), or the electronet can be burst with a Strength check (DC 25, also as a full-round action).

Q: What is the attack roll modifier when attacking someone who is knocked out? Is someone who is knocked out also prone?

A: Generally, yes, a knocked-out character is also prone. So you'd get a +4 circumstance bonus to attack that character with a melee weapon, and a -4 penalty to ranged attacks against that character.

Q: If someone is pinned, is he or she prone for purposes of attack roll modifiers against them? In other words, do the pinned and prone modifiers both apply in this situation?

A: "Pinned" doesn't necessarily mean "on the ground." So, no, attackers would only benefit from the effects of the pin on their target.

Q: You were kind enough to provide the Break DC, Hardness, and WP of most weapons with the release of the [Arms & Equipment Guide](#). However, my villains can't destroy the weapons of Force-users since you didn't give that information for lightsabers. Can you please provide that information, or, since the materials used in construction likely make a difference, give a guide for determining these as per common materials used?

A: As a Medium-sized weapon, a lightsaber should only have 5 Hardness and 5 wounds, with a Break DC around 17 or 18.

Q: Is blindness due to poison permanent? A few of my players got some Vong amphistaff poison in their eyes, and I couldn't find any conclusive evidence as to the duration of the effect or the DC to heal. One of them used "cure poison," and I ruled that it cured the blindness but that their sight only partially returned, as it seemed unlikely that they would suddenly be able to see again immediately. I could really use some guidance on this, though.

A: I hadn't noticed that amphistaff "spit poison" didn't have a listed duration. It should last until the poison is washed out of the target's eyes, or until 1d4x10 minutes have passed, whichever comes first.

Q: The *Arms & Equipment Guide* says that weapons can be jury-rigged during the customization process and that they have the properties of the weapon before the customizing process was begun. Does this mean that the time and materials spent so far on the customization are lost, or can the customization process be resumed where it was left off?

For example: A Blaster Rifle requires seven days of work (taking 10 on the repair checks) to customize. If, after five days, it is jury rigged to be used, will it take two days to finish the customization, or will the customization have to start again from the beginning, taking another seven days?

A: What that means is that if you need the weapon to become operational in the middle of a custom job, you can jury-rig it to become functional again -- it just doesn't get the benefits of the custom job yet. But it doesn't add any time to the customization; when you go back to customizing it, you pick up where you left off.

Q: Are the blasters on the Firespray-31 fire-linked? The damage suggests that they are, but it doesn't say so.

A: No, they're not. The Firespray-31's blasters are not fire-linked, and thus should only deal 4d10x2 damage. Good eye!

Q: Does the DR of a ship's hull work against ion damage?

A: Hull DR does *not* apply against ion damage. Once the ion damage penetrates the shields, the ship begins suffering the effects of ion damage.

Q: Can you use the Jedi weapon master's Rapid Strike class ability without using a full round action? For example: Jedi weapon master Bob attacks at +8/+3. He wants to move in and engage the enemy. Normally, he'd only get one attack at +8. Could he move and then use Rapid Strike to get two attacks at +6?

A: No. Whenever you choose to make multiple attacks in the same round -- for most any reason other than Attacks of Opportunity -- it requires a full-round action. So Jedi Bob could move and attack once, or not move and attack three times (at +6/+6/+1). If he had the Heroic Surge feat, though, he could use it to move into position, and then take three attacks as a full attack action.

Q: Why is Jacen Solo's vitality score only 46? As a Jedi guardian, even if he had dead average vitality die rolls of 5 at every level, he would have 54 VP (adding in his Constitution bonus)!

A: It looks like his vitality wasn't updated when he was leveled up for [The New Jedi Order Sourcebook](#). Good catch. He should have 59 vitality points.

Q: I've gone through several characters in the rulebook and discovered that their skill points don't tally up correctly. Should this be considered errata?

A: Possibly -- but likely not. You have to realize that when we create characters for the game, we don't necessarily build them optimally. We try to build them as though they advanced level by level, according to our sources on what they did at various times in their lives. That means that they sometimes pick up skills as cross-class skills, and, therefore, spend more on their skill points than they would have if we'd just created them "all levels at once." So if you've noticed a small discrepancy in skill points, it's probably just a symptom of how they were created. Other numbers, though -- such as number of feats, attack bonuses, and save bonuses -- are more "hard," and if you notice any discrepancies there, chances are there was a miscalculation, and we'd appreciate finding out about it.

Do you have a rules question about the Star Wars Roleplaying Game? Send it to the [Jedi counselor](#), and then check back here every other week for the latest batch of answers!

Jedi Counseling 9: Spinning Ships

[JD Wiker](#)

"Jedi Counseling" returns to conquer your conundrums about the [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) Designer JD Wiker addresses your questions about "potions of healing," Cooperation, stopping rockets with the Force, tractor beam fights, and what happens when you can't pull your starship out of a spin!



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: Luke is standing in a hall and has his lightsaber in hand but not ignited. Greedo goes running by and passes through an area Luke threatens. Since igniting a lightsaber is a free action, does Luke get a chance to ignite it and take his attack of opportunity?

A: No. You can only take free actions on your own turn.

Q: Are there any items that speed up healing, similar to potions of *cure light wounds* in **D&D** or "boosters" like those in some sci-fi shows?

A: There currently aren't any, and it was a design decision to not create them. Bacta tanks are the pinnacle of healing technology in *Star Wars*, and we didn't want to change that by making something better.

Q: Move Object states that Medium-size beings are in the 5 to 50kg range. Um, most Medium-size people are more than 50kg, but not that much (well, a lot less than the 500kg range, which is the next difficulty). Was this an error, or did you want to show that a person could be moved with the same difficulty as most other Medium-size things?

A: That seems to be an error. Medium-size beings should fall under the range of 51 to 500 kg.

Q: Can you use Cooperation (found on page 73 of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook) with Force skills? If so, what is the vitality point cost for these skills?

A: Yes, you can use Cooperation with Force skills. The vitality cost is the same as if you had used the skill since, as the rules for Cooperation state, that's what you're doing.

Q: Does a lightsaber ignore the hardness of Yuuzhan Vong weapons or not?

A: Judging by all the times Jedi have used lightsabers to try to cut through amphistaves, I'd say no, they don't ignore the hardness of Yuuzhan Vong weapons.

Q: Is it possible for a capital ship's weapons batteries to fire only one individual weapon, or does the entire battery have to fire all the time?

A: Yes, you can fire individually if you desire.

Q: If a character fails a starship stunt and then fails the check to see if she goes out of control, how does she recover if the DC is higher than any roll she could get? For instance: A 1st-level fringer fails a tight loop (a DC 25 maneuver she could barely complete with a lucky roll) and then goes out of control by failing the next check. She goes into a spin with a -8 to her check, so now she has to roll a 25 on a 20-sided die, which is clearly impossible. Does she just keep spinning? How can she ever right herself?

A: She can't -- not all at once, anyway. She'll keep spinning until she hits something, or until someone else comes along and helps her out. But each round, she gets a chance to regain control again. Eventually, she's only going to miss her check by 15 or less, which means she's yawing instead of spinning.

Now her check penalty drops to -6. The DC for a tight loop is still 25, but assuming the character was created for flying, she'll probably have a total Pilot skill modifier of about +10 or +11. The -6 penalty means she now has roughly a +5 or +6 total skill modifier, meaning that she just has to keep trying until she rolls a 19 or 20 on her check. Assuming that she's not in any danger, she can just take 20.

Q: We had a situation where we were getting into our ship, our shields were down, and we were being shot at by a heavy blaster pistol. Our GM ruled that it was like ship-to-ship combat. But I don't think a pistol can hit that easily.

A: The Defense for a starship will work fine in personal combat; a starship is a pretty big target. Use the attack and defense modifiers from Table 11-6 in the core rulebook (which means a Human actually gains a +12 attack bonus; a Medium-sized starship has a +0 modifier to its Defense against the attacker).

Q: Is it possible to use the Force skill Move Object in a battle situation? The rules allow for it, and the check to stop, say, a thermal detonator or rocket would be easy (DC 10) due to their low weight. Granted, in normal circumstances, the player would have to ready an action to do this. However, I feel that some other action should be necessary, like a Reflex check or something; otherwise, it just seems too easy to snatch missiles and stuff out of the air.

A: Move Object really isn't designed to allow a Force-user to stop projectiles (or alter their course). If you wish to create a set of rules that allow for this option, that's certainly within your right as the GM. Personally, I'd make it a feat, and make sure it's not terribly easy to do. Remember, we don't see Jedi doing this sort of thing in the movies, so it's plainly not easy.

Q: My character has the Quick Draw feat. A goon has a blaster pulled and aimed at my character. My hero wants to pull out his own blaster and fire in the next round. Since he has Quick Draw, does a roll of initiative for the next round between the two characters determine who fires first?

A: Technically speaking, yes, assuming they've not both already rolled initiative. Of course, if the goon has a blaster already out, then presumably he had surprise on your character and could fire first, before you even rolled initiative. You might want to rethink just how fast your character really is.

Q: With the Point Blank Shot skill (which gives a hero a +1 bonus to hit and damage and increases the point blank range to 10 m), should the DC to avoid stun damage also be increased by +1?

A: No. Point Blank Shot doesn't affect anything except attack and damage rolls.

Q: I'm running an all-Sith campaign in a Sith timeline and was wondering about Sith swords. What would be a good estimation for hardness and wound points? I was going to use the same hardness as longswords, which is 10, but 2 wound points (as with longswords) seems a bit weak for an alchemically forged sword. Plus, Sith swords are Large weapons, whereas longswords are Medium size. Would a hardness of 10 with 4 or 5 wound points be acceptable?

A: I'd go with hardness 10 and 10 wound points. Sith swords don't shatter all that easily, even though they look like glass.

Q: What is the minimum distance that a starship can travel in hyperspace? Are there any penalties for performing microjumps?

A: A few of the novels make microjumps sound quite difficult, but at present, there are no rules for how to modify Astrogate checks to account for them. I would allow the starship crew to make microjumps by taking a -10 penalty to their Astrogate checks, but that's really just a rule of thumb.

Q: Let's say there are two spaceships, both equipped with tractor beams, engaged in combat with each other. The first attempts to use its tractor beam to pull the other closer; the second wishes to use its tractor beam to push the other away (to avoid being boarded).

Do the two beams cancel each other out? Is there a skill roll in here somewhere? Or does whichever ship wins initiative get to perform its action, and the second simply has to wait its turn?

A: The easy answer is that they simply cancel each other out, assuming both pilots fail at their "resist tractor beam" rolls -- or, for that matter, if both succeed! But, technically, the ships take turns, in initiative order, tractoring the other vessel and taking free actions to resist. It might look a little strange -- one ship getting closer, then the other getting farther away -- but that's one of the oddities of turn-based movement. What you're really concerned with is where they are at the end of each round.

Q: I'm new to the game, and though I've read the rules over and over, I can't figure out how to make a character. Help!

A: If you're having trouble understanding the rules, use pages 14-15 of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook as a guide, and refer back to them regularly. Your first character is liable to take a while to finish, but after that, they'll go a lot more smoothly. And if you're still having trouble, e-mail me with your specific questions, and I'll explain as best I can.

Do you have a rules question about the Star Wars Roleplaying Game? Send it to the [Jedi counselor](#), and then check back here every other week for the latest batch of answers!

Jedi Counseling 10: Force Lightning

[JD Wiker](#)

The universe is a vast place, full of questions about the [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#), and game designer JD Wiker wants to be the first person to answer them all! (Well, within reason.) This time out, JD explains what happens when the dark side prevents you from qualifying for a prestige class, why your mother warned you to not wear your jump boots in the house, and how Combat Expertise affects taking multiple attacks. Plus, you'll get a new version of the Force Lightning skill and the Jedi's "Block" ability.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: I recently watched *Attack of the Clones* again, and I couldn't help noticing that Force Lightning doesn't work in the movie the way it does in the rules. For one thing, Obi-Wan blocks it with his lightsaber, which should be impossible, since you have to make a saving throw, and you can't deflect an attack that calls for a saving throw. Then, a few minutes later, Yoda blocks Dooku's Force Lightning *with his bare hand*, and even shoots it back at Dooku! The rules don't let you do this, so how do you explain that?

A: After we saw *Attack of the Clones*, we scratched our heads over that scene, too. We'd seen the script for *Episode II*, but not the dramatic final fight scene -- so we hadn't realized that our rules didn't reflect what happened in that combat! We talked about it and ultimately put together a sort of "house rule" for how to change the Force Lightning skill. Then we put it on the Internet to see what the players thought of it. After lots of discussion and several changes, we decided we needed to change the rules. Here's what we did.

Force Lightning (Int)

Dark Side Force Skill; requires the Force-Sensitive and Alter feats.

You can call upon the Force to blast a target with bolts of energy.

Check: Make a skill check to determine the amount of damage inflicted by Force Lightning.

Result	Damage
14 or less	No damage
15-19	2d6
20-29	2d8
30+	2d10

Then make a ranged attack. If your attack hits, the target suffers the listed damage and must attempt a Fortitude save (DC 20). On a failed save, the target is dazed for 1 round. If the save fails by 10 or more, the target is instead dazed for 1d4+1 rounds. A dazed target falls prone as well.

Special: Force Lightning has a range of 10 m.

You can take 10 on this skill but not take 20.

Because Force Lightning utilizes an attack roll, the attack has a threat range (a roll of 20 on a d20) and can be deflected as per the Jedi class ability.

Time: Force Lightning is an Attack Action.

Vitality Point Cost: 6.

Q: Okay, that explains Obi-Wan blocking the lightning with his lightsaber, but that doesn't explain how Yoda threw it back with his bare hand.

A: True, which is why we came up with this rule change for the Jedi's "Block" ability:

Block

This is a modified version of deflect that allows the Jedi to deflect a ranged attack without the use of a lightsaber. If the Jedi does not have some sort of protective gear (such as an armored gauntlet), or an item that can withstand the ranged attack (such as an energy shield or suitably dense material), the Jedi must spend a Force Point to use this ability. (Force Points spent in this way do not add the usual bonus dice to d20 rolls that the Jedi makes in the subsequent round.) Block doesn't allow the Jedi to extend the defense beyond the Jedi's position,

and all other rules concerning deflect (defense) and deflect (attack) apply.

Q: My character has Combat Expertise. If I lower my attack bonus past the +6, +11, or +16 marker, do I lose an attack? For example: I have a +7/+2 attack bonus (BAB = +6/+1, Str mod +1). If I use Combat Expertise for a full +5 Defense, is my attack only +2, or is it +2/-3?

A: It's +2/-3. You're taking a penalty on your attack, not on your attack bonus.

Q: The jump boots in the [Arms & Equipment Guide](#) let a character jump 50 meters. But what is the minimum ceiling that the jump boots require to make a move? Can they use either of these to jump down a hallway?

A: As a rule of thumb for *any* jump, I'd say that the minimum ceiling is equal to half the distance of the jump. That is, when you jump horizontally, you clear a height equal to half the distance, and if this means you hit something, that's where your jump ends.

Q: In the Starships chapter of the revised core rulebook, it states that it takes "minutes" for a starship to get far enough from a planet's gravity well to safely initiate a hyperspace jump. However, it later states (under the rules for climbing and diving) that a planet's gravity well significantly affects movement out to 20 squares from the surface. It certainly does not take "minutes" for a typical starship to move 20 squares. What's up?

A: The gravity well extends well beyond 20 squares, for purposes of whether or not a ship can enter hyperspace. But for purposes of affecting tactical movement, 20 squares is the practical limit.

Q: Does a ship need to be safely outside a planet's gravity well before Astrogate check calculations can begin, or can these be pre-calculated on the surface?

A: They can be pre-calculated on the surface, though the Gamemaster should probably require that the jump be made from a specific point in the solar system, rather than anywhere outside the gravity well.

Q: The character sheet in the revised core rulebook says that Pilot can be used untrained. But the skill entry says it can't. Which is right?

A: The skill entry is correct; Pilot cannot be used untrained.

Q: My character is a Jedi Guardian 2/Dark Side Devotee 2/Dark Side Marauder 2. Upon reaching 6th character level and picking up that second class level in Dark Side Marauder, I failed my degeneration check at character advancement and chose to take a 1-point loss to my character's Strength, lowering him from a 13 to a 12.

Now, here's the problem. By taking that loss, I no longer meet the prerequisite to possess the Power Attack feat. Not only that, but Power Attack is a requirement for picking up the Dark Side Marauder prestige class.

So, what happens to a feat when you no longer meet the requirements to possess it? Does losing my required Strength score cause me to lose the feat, and in turn, the prestige class? Or does losing the feat not matter, since I did meet the requirement when I originally purchased it?

A: What happens is that you keep the feat, but you lose the ability to use it. That means that your character no longer qualifies to be a dark side marauder, so you'll have to choose a class other than dark side marauder at 6th level, or revise your choice of losing a point of Strength and lose the point from a different ability.

Q: Here's the situation: Obi Wan is standing in a corridor. Jango Fett drops vertically from a 6-meter-high ledge and lands to the left of Kenobi (adjacent to the Jedi). Obi-Wan has his lightsaber ignited, so does he get to make an attack of opportunity when Jango enters and exits the square located to the left and above Kenobi's shoulder (the middle 2-meter square in the "stack" of three Jango fell through)?

A: The *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* doesn't deal with three-dimensional space for purposes of Attacks of Opportunity, but this certainly makes sense as a house rule.

Q: Per the [second installment](#) of "Jedi Counseling," the area affected by grenades is calculated from the corners, the same as for spells in **D&D**. But in the *Arms & Equipment Guide*, under flechette guns, it says that a 2-meter-radius flechette round affects the target square and all eight surrounding squares.

Is the *Arms & Equipment Guide* in error, or is it just that flechettes and grenades are handled differently?

A: The *Arms & Equipment Guide* is in error; measure from the corner.

Q: I noticed that you had provided armor bonus-to-Damage Reduction conversions for several types of armor, but there are a few in the [Rebellion Era Sourcebook](#) that I haven't seen stats for: assault trooper armor, zero-g space trooper armor, and storm commando armor. What should the DR be for those?

A: Assault trooper armor should be DR 7, Zero-g space trooper armor should be DR 8, and Storm Commando armor should be DR 4.

Q: Is it possible for Jedi to detect another character's amount of Dark Side Points, or, for that matter, whether the other character has any Dark Side Points at all?

A: No. We considered adding a rule like this for [The Dark Side Sourcebook](#), but we realized that if Jedi could do that, they'd be able to sniff out darksiders at any time. The books and movies (particularly the prequel trilogy) make it pretty clear that Jedi can't do this. At best, they can sense a threat (using the Force-Sensitive ability to avoid being surprised), but other than that, they have to rely on other abilities to determine who is and who isn't a darksider.

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Jedi Counseling 11: Illusion Confusion

[JD Wiker](#)

Brace yourselves, because this installment of "Jedi Counseling" tackles two really big issues: the Force skill Illusion and the limits of starship sensors. [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker also addresses what happens when a bearded Jedi tells a slimy death-stick dealer to go home and rethink his life.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: I don't understand how the Illusion skill works. Can you give me an example of how it should work with a bunch of different creatures with different modes of perception, and maybe different levels of susceptibility to the Force?

A: Sure. Let's say that Valara Saar, a Force adept, wants to approach the entrance to a hangar bay, and the only way there is down a 10-meter corridor. In the corridor is a Human security guard (Guard A), a Yuuzhan Vong warrior disguised as a Human security guard (Guard B), a droid, a vornskr (on a leash held by Guard B), and a boneworm (hidden in a ventilation duct).

There are also two security cameras in the corridor: Camera 1, pointed away from the hangar door, and Camera 2, pointed toward the door to the hangar. The boneworm's hiding place is directly below Camera 1, meaning it won't be seen unless it attacks.

Meanwhile, in a nearby security room, another Human security guard (Guard C) is watching the monitor for Camera 1; he's within 10 meters of the Force-user. Yet another Human security guard (Guard D) is in the security room, watching Camera 2. Guard D is a little further away -- about 12 meters away from Valara Saar.

Valara wants to scare everyone away, because she's feeling too tired to fight. She decides to create an illusion of Darth Vader striding down the corridor, hoping the guards will go hide in the security room, leaving Valara to stroll past unchallenged. She doesn't know that Guard B is a Yuuzhan Vong and won't be affected. She also doesn't know what a vornskr is, or that it can detect Force-users. And, of course, she has no idea about the hidden boneworm in the vent.

So, Valara creates her illusion, and Darth Vader comes around the corner and walks halfway down the corridor, stopping 1 meter from the hidden boneworm. He then ignites his lightsaber, and intones "Leave now or be destroyed." Here's how everyone reacts:

Guard A sees the Vader illusion, hears it threaten him, and decides that it's not worth 100 credits a week to get slaughtered by Darth Vader. He runs for the security door.

Guard B (the Yuuzhan Vong) sees nothing. Yuuzhan Vong can't be affected by Force illusions. He doesn't react, except to raise an eyebrow at the fleeing Human guard.

The droid, being a machine, can't perceive the Vader illusion, either. It doesn't react.

The vornskr senses the presence of a Force-user, but if Guard B lets go of the leash, the vornskr rushes right past "Vader" and goes after Valara, around the corner. It can see Vader, but it doesn't see him in the Force, whereas Valara is a big beacon.

The boneworm's blindsight is telling the creature that there's something in front of it -- because Illusion doesn't target specific senses, and so doesn't leave any special senses out -- so it attacks and, of course, misses. Unfortunately, the boneworm isn't smart enough to catch on that Vader is an illusion, and so it just keeps attacking the empty space.

Guard C, watching Camera 1, is within 10 meters of Valara Saar and within 10 meters of the illusion she's creating. But he doesn't have a line of sight to the Vader illusion; he can see it only through the monitor.

Guard D, on the other hand, is within 10 meters of the illusion, but he's more than more 10 meters from Valara Saar. On his own monitor, he sees Guard A run screaming from something, but he can't see what Guard A was seeing. He turns to look at Guard C's monitor, across the room, and sees Guard C reacting with horror -- to a picture of an empty stretch of corridor (with what looks like a meter-long worm flailing around-the boneworm). But he doesn't see Vader.

If Guard D goes over to Guard C's monitor to get a closer look, he'll come within Valara's range, and so he'll suddenly perceive the Vader illusion as well. But because he saw that there was nothing there just a moment before, he'll get a Will save because he can tell that something strange is going on.

Conversely, if Guard D merely switches his monitor over to pick up what's on Camera 1, he'll still see nothing; he's still outside Valara's range.

If Guard C turns to look at Guard D's monitor, though, he'll still see the illusory Vader -- until he actually moves over to Guard D's station, and thus leaves Valara's range. At that point, he won't see Vader on either monitor. Then he'll sense that something's up, and he'll get a Will save.

Valara, meanwhile, peering around the corner but staying in the shadows, can see the illusory Vader as a kind of hazy Vaderlike hologram. When the vornskr attacks her, though, she ceases spending vitality on the illusion, and Vader simply vanishes.

Later, when everyone looks at the playback for Camera 1, they won't see Vader at all. They'll see Guard A running for his life; they'll see the vornskr rush around the corner and look briefly at something in the corridor; and they'll see the boneworm attacking empty air.

Q: My players and I were wondering if the Force skill Affect Mind has a duration. For example, in *Attack of the Clones*, Obi-Wan Kenobi tells Elan Sleazebaggano, the death stick dealer, to go home and rethink his life. So, did Obi-Wan just stop the guy from dealing death sticks with a wave of his hand? Or did Sleazebaggano walk out of the nightclub, head home, suddenly decide he was being foolish, and turn right back around?

A: A character affected by the "suggestion" aspect of Affect Mind will try to carry out the suggestion, after which he's free to do whatever he wants. In the case of Obi-Wan at the bar with Elan Sleazebaggano, Elan went home, rethought his life, and either decided that he didn't mind dealing in death sticks or decided to go straight. In either case, he carried out the instruction he was given, but Obi-Wan didn't force him to change his life -- just to think about doing so.



Q: In the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook, the Quickness feat grants +3 vitality points, and the Toughness feat grants +3 wound points. Since each burns a feat, and therefore has the same cost, shouldn't Quickness receive more vitality points?

A: Quickness is tempting to 1st-level characters with low vitality dice, because it often increases their vitality points by 150 percent. But, in the long run, Toughness is generally more useful. The drawback to Toughness, though, is that it only works when you're taking wound damage -- and thus, risking failing the Fort save for having taken wound damage, and possibly being knocked out.

Q: I recently put my group into a starship combat situation, and I was wondering about the limits of starship sensors. Can they sense life signs? Species? Power sources? What's the story?

A: We know that starship sensors can sense life signs from *Star Wars: A New Hope*. As Artoo and Threepio flee the *Tantive IV* aboard the escape pod, the Imperials prepare to fire on it. But then an officer tells them to hold their fire, because no life forms were detected aboard the pod. And when Luke heads toward Dagobah in *Star*

Wars: The Empire Strikes Back, he points out to Artoo that there are "massive life form readings."

Plainly, then, detecting life forms is possible, and a sensor operator can probably get an idea of the overall size of any given reading. For example, four Medium-size life forms might register as a "huge concentration" of life forms -- but then, so would eight small life forms. So the operator can't get specific numbers, except by inference. This sort of check would be a Computer Use check (DC 15). Regardless, ship sensors probably aren't finely tuned enough to pick out species.

Sensors can also detect the size of ships, their relative speeds (docking, cruising, ramming, and so on), and the type of ship. A successful Computer Use check (DC 10) would reveal this information. Learning if a ship's shields and weapons are powered up or how much damage it has sustained is slightly more difficult and requires a Computer Use check against DC 15.

Sensors can pick up similar information about planets. Luke does so while he's scanning Dagobah, arriving at the conclusion that there aren't any cities or settlements. Checking for the presence of technology is a Computer Use check (DC 15).

Scanning for any one thing (life forms, basic ship information, specific ship information, or the presence or absence of technology) takes a move action, but a character can gain a +2 competence bonus for taking a full round to perform the scan.

The Gamemaster should use these examples as guidelines for other kinds of scans.

Do you have a rules question about the Star Wars Roleplaying Game? Send it to the [Jedi counselor](#), and then check back here every other week for the latest batch of answers!

Jedi Counseling 12: Ewok Jedi?

[*JD Wiker*](#)

This installment of "Jedi Counseling" covers everything from the Yuuzhan Vong to starship sensors, Ewok Jedi to Jedi weapon masters, and a few assorted starship conversions as well. Join [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker as he guides you in the ways of the Force.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: Can a jumping character land on a specific point? For example, could a character jumping onto a speeder bike choose to land on the front forks of the bike? What if the speeder bike were moving at the time?

A: A reasonable thing to do with a character who wishes to land on a specific spot is to require a Dexterity check. Success means that the character lands where he planned; failure means he landed in the same square, but not *precisely* where he intended. The DC should be based on how large or small an object it is, though never lower than 10 (since that's the DC of hitting a square). Something half the size of a square should be about DC 15; something half that size should be about DC 20. If the target is moving at the time, the DC should increase by at least +5.

Q: [The Power of the Jedi Sourcebook](#) talks about Jedi armorers. How would I make a character like that? Would it require a Jedi with some levels of tech specialist, or can I combine them somehow?

A: Nothing quite so complicated. All it really takes is a Jedi with ranks in Craft (armor).

Q: I've noticed there aren't many dark side Force powers used by dark Jedi that would make them particularly tough opponents if they were up against large numbers of characters. For example, in the *Tales of the Jedi* comics, Exar Kun held the entirety of the Republic senate immobile. And in another issue, Sith Lord Naga Sadow used the dark side to drag solar flares from a pair of binary suns, destroying a fleet that was pursuing him. Where are these powers?

A: We deliberately chose not to include such powers in the game. Were they to exist in the game, darksiders could destroy entire planets or defeat entire cities at a time. That makes for a great epic story, but in games, where some level of balance is necessary, even with severe limitations, a character could probably use this ability several times in the course of his career. And that means that little or nothing could stand against such a character.

There's nothing stopping you from creating these powers, if you like -- just be aware that they can be real campaign-enders.

Q: Why are the senior Yuuzhan Vong warriors not allowed the prestige class elite trooper -- or any others, for that matter, apart from officer? I would have thought that elite trooper in particular was ideally suited to them, especially because they are depicted in the novels as great fighters.

A: The only way to advance in Yuuzhan Vong society (in the warrior caste, anyway) is to become a commander. The Yuuzhan Vong might be great warriors, but they don't have anything like a "special ops" group, which is what the elite trooper prestige class represents.

Q: What is the range of the Yuuzhan Vong amphistaff when it's used as a whip?

A: The same range as any other melee weapon: 2 meters.

Q: The book says the amphistaff can spit venom 20 meters, but the chart says only 2 meters. Which is correct?

A: Two meters is the range *increment*. A ranged weapon can generally fire a maximum distance equal to 10 times the range increment -- in this case, 20 meters.

Q: Why does the coufee have a 5-meter range increment if it is just a dagger?

A: The coufee has that range increment because it can be thrown.

Q: If an Ewok is trained as a Jedi, doesn't his/her Master train the student in the use of a lightsaber? I can understand an Ewok not being able to use a blaster pistol, but being a Jedi implies that someone has sat down and taught at least the basics of Jedi tradition to the Padawan, in most cases.

A: That doesn't mean that it isn't difficult to do so. That's all the Primitive limitation does -- it forces a character to use feat slots to get those handy high-tech weapon group proficiencies.

Q: If a primitive creature picks up say, a blaster carbine, would he be able to use it at all, or would he just get a penalty to his attack with that weapon?

A: He'd still be able to use it; he'd just get a -4 penalty.

Q: Let's say my character is fighting in open space and hits an enemy in a space suit (DR 5), causing 11 points of wound damage. Because the damage exceeds the DR of the suit, is that considered a space suit rupture in a vacuum?

A: Definitely.

Q: If a spacesuit ruptures, what is the damage to the wearer? And is it possible to repair the damage while still in space?

A: See Thin Air in Chapter 12 of the revised core rulebook. As for repairing the damage, yes, it's possible. I'd make it a Repair check of DC 15 or so, with a -4 penalty if the character doesn't have some kind of puncture-repair kit handy.

Q: In the Jedi weapon master section of the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, it says that the character gets a bonus weapon group at 4th and 8th level. Is that in addition to the bonus feat the character receives at that level?

A: That's a misprint. It's supposed to say: "The Jedi weapon master gains additional bonus feats at 4th and 7th level."

Q: I've been looking through the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*



website to find revised edition stats for the starships listed in the [web enhancement](#) for *Starships of the Galaxy*. Mainly, I'm looking for the TIE Defender and Red Star I conversions, but the shieldship and YT-1930 stats wouldn't hurt, either.

A: A few ships presented as web enhancements were omitted by accident.

The TIE Defender would have a speed similar to the TIE Advanced x1, so let's put it at 11 squares in space, and roughly 1,200 km/h in atmosphere (20 squares atmospheric). The missiles would probably be Ordinary quality, for a +10 attack bonus.

Being based on the TIE Defender, the *Red Star I* would be similar but slightly faster. So let's say 12 squares in space, and roughly 1,300 km/h in atmosphere (22 squares atmospheric). The missiles would still be Ordinary quality (a +10 attack bonus).

The YT-1930 is comparable to the stock YT-1300s and YT-2400s (if a bit slower), so I'd put it at 4 squares in space, but 800 km/h (13 squares) in atmosphere.

Shieldships, on the other hand, are big, lumbering monsters built to travel in space, but not in atmosphere. I'd give them 3 squares per action in space, but no atmospheric speed.

Q: Can starship sensors be used for anything other than object detection? For example, can they be used to determine shield status and/or angling? What about weapon status, engine status, or the presence of life forms aboard a starship?

A: Yes, starship sensors can do more than simply detect objects. They can determine whether a ship's shields are up or down (but not the percentage shield points remaining). Sensors can also detect whether a ship's shields are currently "angled" or not, whether engines and weapons are powered up, and whether life forms are present or not. In that last case, though, the sensor scan needs to focus on an individual ship (or other object) -- not just a fire arc.

Q: When establishing pursuit, does the pursuer need to be in the same square as the target or in the square behind? The rule and the example say different things on page 223 of the revised core rulebook.

A: The ships have to be in the same square. The example is in error.

Q: When establishing pursuit, must the pursuer and target pilots roll for hazard avoidance to keep from colliding with each other?

A: No, this is an exception to the normal avoid hazard rules.

Q: When two or more ships attempt to pursue a single target, they need to occupy the same square as each other. Do they need to roll avoid hazard checks to make sure they don't collide with each other?

A: Unless they start the round operating as a wing, yes.

Q: How much does a power generator for an E-web blaster weigh? And how much does one cost? It's not listed in the rulebook.

A: A power generator for use with a E-web blaster should weigh about 15 kg and cost around 750 credits.

Q: In [The Dark Side Sourcebook](#), Armor Proficiency (light) was required for the Sith warrior prestige class. However, this is not listed as a requirement in the [PDF file of conversions](#) to bring the book in line with the revised core rules. So was this dropped or omitted by accident?

A: It looks like it was omitted from *The Dark Side Sourcebook* conversion document by accident.

Do you have a rules question about the Star Wars Roleplaying Game? Send it to the [Jedi counselor](#), and then check back here every other week for the latest batch of answers!

Jedi Counseling 13: The Force

[JD Wiker](#)

In this new installment of "Jedi Counseling," [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker answers your questions about Force skills, Force feats, Force spirits, Force cooperation -- and, oh yeah, some other stuff, too, like droid translator units, the Miraluka alphabet, and whether or not Wizards has an "Epic-Level Handbook" for *Star Wars* up their sleeves.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: What is the effective range for Force Mind and its derivatives?

A: The effective range of Force Mind, Knight Mind, and Master Mind is 10 meters.

Q: Does using Force skills as a free action (by way of the Force Mastery feat) have a limit to the number of skills that can be used in a single round?

A: According to the rules on free actions, the upper limit is set by what the Gamemaster decides is reasonable on a case-by-case basis.

Q: Can you use the Force while paralyzed or under any other condition where the mind is still working but the body is not? For example, could my character use Move Object on an attacker while my character was paralyzed?

A: The game definition of "paralyzed" states that you can't move and are considered helpless. So you can still take actions that don't require you to move. Most Force powers fall into this category. A dazed character, on the other hand, would not be able to act.

Q: I read through the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook* again and a question came to my mind: Can Miraluka read? I mean, they use sense surroundings, and *POTJS* also says that you can compensate for a sense (like eyesight) with the Force. But in one of your "Jedi Counseling" columns, you said that one could only sense beings at large and without any details. So why do they have the skill Read/Write Miraluka?

A: For the same reason that heroes in a modern-day Earth-based campaign might have "Read/Write Braille." It's logical to assume that a species that cannot see would invent an alphabet by which they can convey nonverbal messages. Presumably, then, written Miraluka is something that is perceptible to a sense other than sight, touch being the most likely.

Q: On page 57 of the [Arms & Equipment Guide](#), the SD-9 droid's equipment includes "Shields (DC 6)." I don't understand how the DC of shields works. Is this a typo?

A: It appears to be a typo; it should read "DR," rather than "DC."

Q: I understand that cortosis armor will shut off a lightsaber that hits it. You've also described lightsaber blades as "frozen blaster technology," meaning that a lightsaber blade is essentially a shot from a blaster. Does that mean that cortosis has a special benefit against blaster fire?

A: Well, no. It's a question of range, at the very least. A lightsaber's blade is still connected to the weapon that created the energy. A blaster bolt isn't connected to the blaster. You might rule that cortosis could "shut off" a blaster fired from the next square, but since the wielder can just squeeze the trigger again, it's kind of a moot point.

Q: One of my players is running a droid character with a translator unit. When he makes his Intelligence check to understand a language, he adds that language to his list of spoken languages. Are we doing this right? It seems awfully easy for him to just keep adding languages like that.

A: Making the Intelligence check allows the droid to understand the spoken language and reply. The character doesn't get to add the language to his list of spoken languages.

Q: When you fight defensively, you take a -4 penalty to your attack rolls. So what happens if you use Deflect (attack) when fighting defensively? Do you incur an additional -4 penalty to your Deflect (Attack) roll, for a total of -8?

A: Yes, that's correct: a -4 penalty for fighting defensively and a further -4 penalty for Deflect (attack), for a total of -8.

Q: So, then, when using total defense, you get a +4 dodge bonus to your Defense. Are you unable to redirect those shots offensively at all? Or do you simply impose the base -4 penalty?

A: You simply impose the -4 penalty for Deflect (attack). This is an exception to the usual rules for total defense.

Q: If I were using Battlemind at the time, would the attack bonus that provides also apply to the attack roll for using Deflect (attack)?

A: Certainly. The Force bonus to attack granted by Battlemind doesn't differentiate between the attacks you make during your turn or attacks you make as a reaction, such as Deflect (attack) or Attacks of Opportunity.

Q: The "[GM's Aid: Master Table of Aliens](#)" on the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* website lists Dugs as having something called "Great Shout." But I can't find it in the revised core rulebook. What does this ability do?

A: That's an ability from the original core rulebook, from when Dugs were listed among the aliens in the back of the book. It allows a Dug to bellow loudly enough to be heard over a distance equal to its Constitution x 300 meters.

Q: Is Wizards of the Coast ever going to release an "Epic Level Handbook" for the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*?

A: Wizards has announced no intention to do so. The major stumbling blocks are that the most powerful characters in the *Star Wars* universe are themselves 20th level. Some people see that as a mistake, though, saying that characters like Yoda, the Emperor, Mace Windu, Darth Vader, and Luke Skywalker (circa The New Jedi Order era) should be higher level. There's a certain amount of logic to that argument, but not enough to justify a sourcebook to support a handful of nonplayer characters.

Many people who ask about an epic-level sourcebook for *Star Wars* really just want to have characters advance beyond 20th level. But nothing in the revised core rulebook says that you absolutely can't; it's your campaign, after all. Just extend Table 3-1: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits; the progression is fairly clear.

If, on the other hand, what you really want are epic-level feats, you're probably best served by simply converting feats from the *Epic Level Handbook* for *Dungeons & Dragons*.

Q: If I have a character with the Martial Arts feat, and my hero attacks unarmed with his off hand, does he suffer the usual penalties for attacking with a weapon "in" his off hand?

A: Yes, though his off hand is considered a "light" weapon for unarmed attacks.

Q: When a Force Warrior takes Dissipate Energy as a feat and also has the Defensive Roll class ability, which saving throw is applied first against wound damage?

A: Whichever the Force warrior chooses. However, if he tries Dissipate Energy first, he can't afterward try the Defensive Roll; he's already let the damage hit him, and Defensive Roll is about changing a hit to a near miss.

Q: Are there any limitations to the Force Flight feat? For example, could I use Force Flight to fly as high as I wanted, or is there a limit to the height? When you have moved the allotted distance for your roll, do you have to land or can you spend vitality to stay in the air? Can you stop yourself falling by using Force Flight?

A: Force Flight lets you fly as high as you like, so long as you keep spending vitality points. Even if you choose not to move, you can spend vitality points to remain in the air. If you have a move action between the time that you start falling and the time that you hit, you can activate Force Flight to keep yourself from hitting the ground.

Q: If a character has multiple attacks per round and would like to switch targets, is there an additional penalty for doing so?

A: There is no penalty for switching targets.

Q: According to the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, Force spirits have to make a Will save every time they manifest. If they fail, that's their last time manifesting before they become one with the Force. What happens if a hero has the Guiding Spirit feat and his spirit fails its Will save? Does he lose the feat?

A: Force spirits allowed by the Guiding Spirit feat are exempt from this rule.

Q: If a character modifies a blaster to increase its range, will this also increase the range of the blaster when it's set to stun? So, for example, would the 4-meter range of a blaster increase to 6 meters?

A: Modifying the stun setting range should be treated as a separate modification.

Q: Can two Force-users cooperate on a Force skill check? For example, could one Jedi help another with an Affect Mind check, using the cooperation rules?

A: Yes. Both characters would pay the usual vitality point cost for using the skill. And if the skill in question were a dark side skill, both characters would gain Dark Side Points. In essence, though they're cooperating to get the most out of one skill check, both characters are treated as making separate skill checks (which, essentially, they are).



check back here every other week for the latest batch of answers!

Jedi Counseling 14: Run Away!

[JD Wiker](#)

This fourteenth installment of "Jedi Counseling" features answers to questions about awarding experience for running away, Dark Side Points for torturing droids, Generally Accepted *Star Wars* Principles, and the Sith warrior's lightsaber deflection disability! Join [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker for another thrilling foray into truth!



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: My friends and I were looking at the conversions for [The Dark Side Sourcebook](#) prestige classes, and we were wondering why the Sith warrior doesn't get the Deflect ability. Even the Sith acolyte has it! Did you leave it out because Sith warriors already get so many abilities, or was there a story-driven reason?

A: In all honesty, I think it was simply an oversight. Sith warriors should get the deflect abilities at the same rate, and in the same order, as Sith Lords (at 1st, 2nd, 5th, and 7th).

Q: The revised core rulebook speaks about experience awards for an encounter in terms of "defeating" a foe or a hazard. Sometimes, though, I just want the goal of the encounter to be "get out with your hides intact." For example, I'd like to put my players up against a powerful bounty hunter -- one who could wipe out the whole party, if he so desired -- but I don't think they should have to pummel him in combat to get experience. Couldn't I just give them experience for getting away from him alive?

A: Yes, you could, and you should. "Defeat" is a relative term; it really means "overcome." In the example you give, it's better phrased as "avoid," and you should simply rule that if the heroes avoid the bounty hunter without losing a character, they get experience for the encounter as though they'd beaten him in a fight.

Q: I had a question regarding the Move Object skill. One member of my group made the check for the maximum weight that the table in the skills list provides. But instead of lifting or moving the target, he used it to crush his target -- an enemy -- to death. He justified this use of the skill by saying that the force necessary to lift that much should also be enough to crush the guy. Is this possible? It doesn't seem like it should be able to be used that way.

A: Move Object does not allow you to crush things. You can pick things up and perhaps move them around, but that's all. What your player did really falls under the heading of "Force Grip."

Q: In the [Power of the Jedi Sourcebook](#), it says that the Jedi healer's Luminous Being special ability can restore a person to full health (erasing all wound damage, vitality damage, and ability damage). Can my Jedi healer use this ability to regenerate lost body parts, like an arm or an eye?

A: Not normally, no. Restoring lost wound points is not the same as regenerating lost body parts, but your GM may choose to allow it under certain circumstances.

Q: I'm having a bit of trouble reconciling the galaxy map in your revised core rulebook with "GASP" -- Generally



Accepted *Star Wars* Principles. It seems as though planets exist on your map where they didn't before. And worse, some planets are clearly in the wrong place. Can you help me understand what kind of fact-checking and approvals went into creating your map?

A: Mapping the *Star Wars* galaxy is a process of constant evolution. We are always discovering new planets, and when these new planets are added to the map, the location of other planets may need to be shifted slightly. Here's a list of known issues with the map provided in the revised core rulebook:

- Saccoria should be located next to Corellia.
- Onderon should be located in the Inner Rim.
- Nar Shaddaa should be on the border of the Mid and Outer Rim.

We're constantly updating our information to ensure that future maps are as accurate as possible. If you think you know of an additional discrepancy on the *Star Wars* galaxy map, you can try posting a question to one of the VIPs at the message boards on starwars.com.

Q: A character in my game decided to torture a droid the party had captured. I felt like he should get a Dark Side Point; the droid was helpless and begging for mercy, and the character didn't need to torture it. The player argued that droids don't count as "sentient" beings, and, in any case, his character wasn't Force-sensitive, and so shouldn't get Dark Side Points. Should he get one or not?

A: It's really hard to make a judgment call like this, since I wasn't there and don't know all the circumstances of the situation. But if the character tortured the droid just for fun or out of spite, I'd probably class this under "Performing a Dubiously Evil Act," in that (I'm guessing) he didn't have to torture the droid to get information out of it.

This then qualifies for a Dark Side Point, since the Force doesn't make a distinction between *organic* sentient beings and *inorganic* sentient beings: torturing a droid is still torturing a sentient being. And even those who aren't Force-sensitive can get Dark Side Points. If a character becomes Force-sensitive later (by picking up the feat), the Force doesn't conveniently forget how evil the character was before.



Q: In the rules for concealment, it states that if a target is in total concealment, an attacker must "guess" where the target is. How do you handle this, especially when it involves a villain trying to guess where the hero is?

A: The GM just doesn't show the players which square, exactly, the target occupies. When the heroes are in total concealment, the GM should pick a group of squares (nine seems about right) centered on where the hero actually is, and then roll randomly to decide which one an opponent chooses.

Q: I was looking at the rules for point defense weapons, and something doesn't make sense. They're treated as though they're fired from a Medium ship, which is a +0 modifier for size. But the point defense laser cannons on the Star Destroyer (on page 232 of the revised core rulebook) show them taking a -8 penalty for size. Which is correct?

A: The rules are correct; the ship stats are not. The attack bonus for the Star Destroyer's point laser cannons should be +14, not +6. This should be considered errata.

Q: The heroes in my campaign are planning to steal an Imperial shuttle in an upcoming session. But I have to admit that I really don't know what this should entail. I can figure out what it takes to get inside an Imperial base, and even to get on board the ship and overpower the crew. But then what? Do the heroes just press "Start?" Or do ships have some sort of electronic ignition key, or maybe an access code you have to enter?

A: Hmm. Personally, I'd give it a Computer Use check to enter the proper codes to start the ignition sequence. The DC should be about 10 for a ship with standard security (like a freighter or a commercial shuttle), going up to DC 15 for a military transport (like the Imperial shuttle), DC 20 for a military space transport, and DC 25 for a capital ship.

Characters who want more security on their own ships can make a Computer Use check to set the new level of security, and the heroes should record this result. Anyone trying to defeat this security can make an opposed Computer Use check against that result. Either party can take 20 on this check, provided they have the time.

Q: There's an item in the [Arms & Equipment Guide](#) called the Traxes BioElectronics Implant Communicator. It's some kind of subcutaneous comlink. If a Wookiee buys one and has it implanted, would someone talking with him via the communicator hear him speaking Basic? If not, could the Wookiee get the communicator modified to translate Shyriiwook into Basic?

A: The Traxes BioElectronics Implant Communicator is really just a subcutaneous comlink -- not a translator unit, by any means. Certainly, it's feasible to modify one to perform a simple translation task. I personally wouldn't allow it to translate more than one language, though; otherwise it gets a little too large to be subcutaneous and still be comfortable.

Q: With Combat Reflexes, are you still allowed to attack each target who provokes an Attack of Opportunity only once per round?

A: Yes, assuming that each target does only one thing to provoke an Attack of Opportunity. If a character does something to provoke more than one Attack of Opportunity, you can make more than one Attack of Opportunity against him (if you've got Combat Reflexes).

For example, say you're standing with a lightsaber when a stormtrooper runs in front of you. He crosses two of your threatened squares, so you get to attack him once. Then he stops in one of those squares and starts firing his blaster rifle. You get another Attack of Opportunity, because he's done something new to provoke one; he's firing a ranged weapon while in a threatened square.

Q: Can a Jedi using the Inspire skill (from the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*) include himself as an "ally," or does the skill only affect other people? The text isn't as clear as some of the similar feats in the core rulebook.

A: The Jedi can't include himself in the effect; it only affects the Jedi's allies.

Q: I was looking at the Jedi investigator class, and it struck me as odd that it requires ranks of Search, but Search isn't a class skill. Is there an error there?

A: Yes. The Jedi investigator should have Search as a class skill. This should be considered errata.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 15: Dark Side Points

[JD Wiker](#)

[Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker is back with more answers to your questions about a game set a long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away. This latest installment of "Jedi Counseling" addresses questions about Gungan weapons, the lethality of explosives (or the lack thereof), and why having a Dark Side Point isn't all that much fun . . .



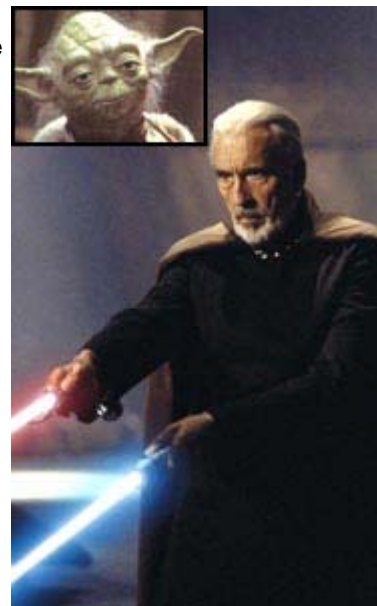
Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: My character has 5 Dark Side Points and 4 Force Points. I know I can spend only one Force Point in a single round. But if I spend a Force Point at one point in the round, can I spend a Dark Side Point later in the same round?

A: No. That's a common misperception about Dark Side Points. *You cannot spend Dark Side Points.* Dark Side Points are a means of measuring how evil a character has become. They are not just "evil Force Points."

Q: In a recent installment of Jedi Counseling, you stated that Jedi cannot determine how many Dark Side Points a character has. However, in Episode II, Yoda says to Count Dooku, "The dark side I sense in you." Also, in *Dark Journey*, a novel in The New Jedi Order series, some of the characters can sense that Jaina Solo is slipping to the dark side, even though she gives no indication other than being a bit grumpy. How do you account for this?

A: Being able to sense whether or not someone is evil and being able to determine their game stats are two different things. And I'd disagree that Jaina gives no other indication than being "a bit grumpy." As I recall, she's described at the end of *Star by Star* as having "eyes filled with hate," and she eagerly attacks enemies, rather than simply defending against them. She becomes cold and ruthless, and even without the Force, I'd have to say that anyone can recognize the change from the Jaina of the *Young Jedi Knights* series of books to the post-*Star by Star* Jaina as being a negative change.



Q: My character is 8th level and has a Reputation score of 7. He tries to attract some followers and ends up with a 2nd-level tech specialist, a 2nd-level scout, a 4th-level diplomat, and a few 1st-level thugs.

Do those followers gain experience? And, if so, what happens if their total levels exceed my character's Reputation score? Would some of them leave his service? Or would he just be unable to attract more followers? The easiest solution seems to be that followers either don't gain experience, or they gain it at a reduced rate.

A: Followers *do* gain experience, but, as you suggest, they only get half of what the rest of the heroes get. When calculating experience, include the follower(s) when you divide by the number of heroes, then cut the followers' share in half, and divide up the remaining half among the heroes.

Followers gaining experience at this rate aren't terribly likely to add a level before the hero's Reputation goes up. But if they do, yes, they'll take their leave of his service.

Q: Can you use a lightsaber to deflect an attack that scores a critical hit?

A: No. If it's scored a critical hit, then, by definition, it's already hit you.

If you mean, "Can you use a lightsaber to deflect an attack that scores a *threat*?" (a natural 20 on the attack roll), the answer is still no. A roll of 20 always hits.

On the other hand, it's only a natural 20 that always hits -- not just an attack roll that results in a threat (such as you get with weapons that have threat ranges of 19-20 or better, such as a blaster rifle). So if someone was firing at you with a blaster rifle and rolled a 19, that wouldn't be an automatic hit. But if the attacker rolled a 20 using that same blaster rifle, that would still be a hit, no matter what your Defense total was.

Q: My fellow gamers and I think that it's kind of odd that a thermal detonator or a fragmentation grenade has almost no chance of killing someone outright. There is no critical roll on the damage, and a hit does damage to vitality first. Have we missed something in the rules, or do you have any suggestions to make this a little more realistic?

A: If I may be so bold, it sounds to me like you've missed something in the spirit of the setting.

Thermal detonators, fragmentation grenades, and other explosives are meant to be lethal to *ordinary* people -- that is, people who don't *have* vitality points. That includes diplomats, experts, thugs, and, of course, commoners.

Heroes, though, are meant to survive most of that kind of stuff. They're *heroes*. The *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* wouldn't be any fun if one fragmentation grenade could kill any character, every time.

Is it realistic? No, and it shouldn't be, because that's not in the heroic spirit of *Star Wars*. Does that mean your game can't be more lethal? No. All it means is that the base game doesn't need to be all that lethal. Feel free to create any house rule you like.

Just remember that any rule that makes vitality points meaningless makes heroes no different from ordinary people, and that's really diverging from the reason why most people play roleplaying games.

Q: Under the description of the Profession skill in the revised core rulebook, an example is given of how a character with 5 or more ranks in an appropriate Profession can get a synergy bonus on other skill checks. Does that work both ways? For example, if a character has 5 or more ranks of Repair, can he get a synergy bonus on Profession (mechanic) skill checks? What if he also has 5 ranks in Craft (starships)? How about Knowledge (systems engineering)?

A: It all depends on whether or not your GM is willing to give you the bonus. All synergy bonuses in *Star Wars* are at the discretion of the GM. The example under Profession is merely a suggestion, not a rule.

Q: If a character had them all, could he get a +6 total synergy bonus on his Profession (mechanic) skill checks? That equates to an extra 600 credits per week of dedicated work . . .

A: Yes, he could -- again, if the GM allows it. Synergy bonuses are one of the few bonus types that stack, as noted in the sidebar on page 260.

Q: How exactly do Gungan energy balls work? In [Secrets of Naboo](#), it says that energy balls deal stun damage to organic beings and disable droids for a few minutes. But I can't find a DC for the stun attack; all I can find is the damage.

A: Gungan energy balls work much the same way that ion pistols work against droids, except that there is no choice to set the energy ball to "stun." It shocks organic beings, and damages the circuits of droids. So use the listed damage (in the core rulebook) for damage to droids, and let organic beings have a Fortitude save (DC 13) to avoid being stunned for 1d4 rounds.

Q: I want my character to use the Gungan force shield, but I don't understand how the shield works. There's a

rule about a +4 bonus when an attack is coming from the fire arc the shield is facing, but I didn't think that concepts like "fire arcs" applied to characters.

A: The Gungan energy shield should give a +2 Defense bonus. Don't worry about fire arcs; that part of the rules was written before it was decided that the d20 rules would not use "fire arcs."

Q: What's the difference between the special initiative actions "delay" and "ready"? They sound the same, except that with one you have to declare what you're going to do in advance, and with the other, you don't. I don't understand why anyone would ever ready an action instead of just delaying.

A: The primary difference is that readying an action lets you act before something happens, and delaying lets you act after it happens. Let me explain.

Let's say you have a delayed action; you want to wait until someone comes through a hatchway before you shoot them. But not only must you wait until that person has come through the hatchway, you also must wait until that person has done whatever else he or she was planning to do (including firing at you). Delaying means you wait until a certain point in the initiative order to declare that you want to act, so you have to wait until the person on the current initiative has finished his actions before you jump in.

But if you had a readied action to shoot anyone who comes through the hatchway, you'd get the opportunity the moment the person appeared -- before he had a chance to finish his move, and certainly before he had a chance to fire at you. Here, you effectively get to take an action in the middle of someone else's action (or, rather, just before).

There are other differences, of course. Now that you have a better grasp on the main distinction, look at the delay and ready rules again. You should be able to spot the other differences fairly easily.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 16: New Rules?

[JD Wiker](#)

Did you know that your [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) revised core rulebook might not have all the latest updates? Designer JD Wiker digs into the matter in this installment of "Jedi Counseling." He also answers player questions about firing bowcasters, dodging flamethrowers, and why splinter shots aren't useless.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: One of my newer players was advancing his character into the soldier class, and he said that what attracted him was all the extra feats he got. I pointed out that the rules state that he gets only one feat, and I showed him that rule on page 65 of the revised core rulebook. But then he showed me *his* copy of the revised core rulebook, and on page 65, it says that a character multiclassing into a new class gets *all* the starting feats.

We were really confused, because both books are otherwise identical: same cover, same layout, and so on. They even say that they're the same printing. So, in addition to "Which book is correct?" I think the bigger question is: Has there been a second printing?

A: There has indeed been a second printing, and it sounds like your player has it. Wizards of the Coast sold through the original printing of the revised core rulebook and decided to take the opportunity of the second printing to fix some of the errata and typos. Unfortunately, for some reason, the version number is the same, so it's a bit confusing as to which book is which.

But you *can* tell the difference by checking the multiclassing rule on page 65, which is just one of the differences. Oh, and your friend's version is the correct one.

We recently posted to the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* website the [full list](#) of everything that changed with the second printing.



Q: I have a question about bowcasters. If it requires a move action to reload after every shot, what do you do about multiple attacks? If a character has the bowcaster cocked from the previous round and wants to make a full attack with a base attack of +6/ +1, can she make both attacks, or would that be like cocking the bowcaster as a free action? I think it would be unfair to say the character can't use all her attack bonuses, but that type of action seems unlikely at the same time.

A: Using a bowcaster is somewhat limiting for characters with multiple attacks, yes. The character won't be able to fire the bowcaster multiple times in the round (unless, perhaps, she has the Heroic Surge feat).

Q: In the Pilot skill description in the revised core rulebook, it states that the Pilot skill can also be used to increase or decrease speed with afterburners, but there's no mention of this in the Starship Combat section. Is this an error?

A: The omission is an error, yes. The rules appeared in the starship combat rules preview in *Star Wars Gamer* #8, but they were left out of the revised core rulebook. Here they are:

Afterburn

Before finishing movement, a pilot can attempt to increase his speed one category (from Cruising to Attack speed, for instance) from his declared speed with a successful Pilot check (DC 10).

Hard Brake

Before finishing movement, a pilot can attempt to lower his speed one category (from Ramming to Attack speed, for instance) from his declared speed with a successful Pilot check (DC 15). The new speed category cannot provide fewer movement points than the ship has already spent this action.

Q: In the [Power of the Jedi Sourcebook](#), the feats Cure Disease and Cure Poison work with Heal Another/Self. Can you Heal Another/Self of disease and poison without these feats? If so, what's the advantage of having them?

A: Remember how poisons and diseases work: They inflict damage to a character's ability scores. Heal Another and Heal Self can repair such damage, but they don't make the poison or disease go away. Cure Poison and Cure Disease *do*.

Q: When gaining character levels, can you alternate between your heroic class and your prestige class for new levels, as with multiclassing? Or is it that once you stop gaining prestige class levels, you cannot go back later?

A: You can switch back and forth as freely as you like, unless there's something about the prestige class that specifically forbids you from doing so (and I can't think of any examples offhand).

Q: In the revised core rulebook, the Jedi ace and the starship ace both have the Familiarity special ability. The Jedi ace entry specifically states that Familiarity grants a competence bonus, while the starship ace mentions "a bonus" but doesn't say what kind. So the question is: Do these two Familiarity special abilities stack if the same starship is chosen as "familiar" by a character with Jedi ace and starship ace levels?

A: No. They should both be competence bonuses, meaning they wouldn't stack.

Q: In a recent game, an X-10 droid attacked a Jedi hero with a flamethrower. I ruled that the Jedi could not deflect the attack, as it was not a blaster attack. Is this correct? (If not, I owe the Jedi a few vitality points!)

A: That's basically correct: The burst of flame from a flamethrower cannot be deflected. But remember that some nonblaster attacks can also be deflected (like slugthrowers, for example). The deciding factor should be whether or not the attacker makes an attack roll, and flamethrowers generally require a Reflex save, rather than making an attack roll. (This would mean that the flamethrower gauntlet on the armor worn by Jango and Boba Fett is in error; ignore the number in the "Critical" column.)

Q: In the Repair skill section, it gives the DC (25) and cost (1/10th price) for repairing a starship component. However, in the Starships section, Tables 11-9: Battle Damage and 11-20: Used Starship Flaws give different Repair DCs than the skill describes, no time gauge to go by (with the exception of a roll of 66 or higher on Table 11-9), and no cost given to repair the various systems.

A: The Repair skill points out that simple repairs take only a few minutes, while complex repairs can take hours or days. So, since the DCs for the checks are geared toward the repair complexities, the repair times are "a few minutes" (for battle damage results with Repair DCs of 10) or "a few hours" (for battle damage results with Repair DCs of 15). If you need a more specific amount of time, roll 1d4 to determine how many minutes or hours are required for a given repair.

Q: How long does it take to repair hull damage?

A: It takes an hour to do a "fast-and-dirty" repair (which needs to be replaced within a day), and eight hours to do a "good as new" repair.

Q: Splinter shots, from page 54 of [The New Jedi Order Sourcebook](#), seem completely useless. There is no benefit that my players or I can find to using them. They don't do any extra damage, and they can't damage hull points, so, as near as we can tell, they're worse than regular shots, which do the same amount of damage but can damage hull points.

A: I've actually been examining this issue recently with another player, and after much discussion, here's what we came up with: You take the splinter shots as a full-round action, as though you were making a full attack. If the splinter shots penetrate the dovin basal "shields," you can immediately switch over to full power and fire an ordinary shot -- potentially, more than one.

The number of shots it took to penetrate the dovin basal's shields determines how many "real" shots you get. If it takes more than one attack roll to penetrate the dovin basal's shields, you only get one attack at full power. If it only takes one attack roll to penetrate the dovin basal's shields, you get to make a full attack (as though you'd been doing that all along).

This system would avoid the "Why not just shoot at full power?" issue, because this way you're not wasting "real" damage on penetrating the shields. (If you can't penetrate them with splinter shots, it's a moot point anyway.) Gunners with only one attack won't particularly benefit, since their "full attack" sequence is still just one shot.

If a ship making a splinter shot attack is in pursuit of another ship, and the splinter shots get through, the pursuing ship may make a single attack as a free action, as per the usual rules for pursuit.

Q: Is there any relation between the number of squares per action and the speed measured in km/h for starship atmospheric speed?

A: Yes. The squares per action are calculated by dividing the km/h by 60.

Q: Another GM and I are having a disagreement about the extra damage a Force warrior inflicts with his unarmed attacks. He believes that the additional damage comes from the hands being energized with the Force, and so Dissipate Energy could be used to dissipate the additional d6 of damage and the enemy would only take the damage from the unarmed attack itself. I disagree. Who's right?

A: It's physical damage. Damage only counts as energy damage if it specifically states that it's energy damage.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 17: Killing Coruscant

[JD Wiker](#)

In this installment of "Jedi Counseling," let [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker clue you in to the quickest way to destroy all of Coruscant. JD also answers player questions about watering down Force Grip, attaching lightsabers to your elbows, *not* burning Dark Side Points, and much more.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: On page 65 of [The Dark Side Sourcebook](#), it says this about Sith poison: "If the victim fails his Will saving throw (DC 20), the character immediately suffers 1d6 damage to his Constitution score. (This damage is neither temporary nor permanent; see below.)"

I have read the entire section on that several times and I cannot find the explanation for the Con damage. Specifically, if it is neither permanent nor temporary, what exactly is it? And if he fails multiple saves, does that stack?

A: That "see below" refers to the following paragraph, which explains how one overcomes the poison -- which doesn't fit into the temporary or permanent definitions in the *Star Wars* rules. (Those definitions have poison affect you once or twice, after which you can recover one way or the other. Sith poison stays in your system until you overcome it by force of will.)

As for whether or not failing multiple saves stacks -- yes, it does.

Q: I seem to remember reading in one of the *Star Wars Gamer* magazines (I can't seem to find that specific issue again) that dark Force witches can be female or male. Is that right?

A: Well, the requirements for the prestige class don't specify that the character must be female, so, off-hand, I'd say that they can be male or female. It rather depends on the setting. The dark Force witches of Dathomir were certainly all female, but that doesn't mean that their equivalent on some other world couldn't be males, as well.

Q: If the new version of Force Grip does in fact apply damage to vitality (if applicable), doesn't that really weaken the skill Force Grip? Vader killed characters (hero-classed, no less, according to the [Rebellion Era Sourcebook](#)) in mere rounds.

A: Remember that the characters you mention were created with the idea that Force Grip worked the way it did in the original core rulebook, with the assumption that those characters failed at least one saving throw.

Q: Please understand that I'm not looking for "instant death" in my game, but in the original core rulebook, Force Grip was a little scarier. It was something to be wary of. Now, my heroes just yawn and say, "I made my save and I take 9 points of vitality. No big deal." It would be more effective to throw a rock at the heroes. Force Grip is nothing to be scared of anymore.

A: You're missing the point of Force Grip, then. Force Grip is extremely useful against nonheroic characters, or severely weakened (no vitality points remaining) heroic characters -- or, in general, anyone who can't fight back. But it's not useful against characters with a lot of vitality points remaining. In other words, it's a decent tactic against nearly defeated opponents, but not so good as an opening gambit.



Q: Page 371 of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook refers to the R2 droid and mentions being able to obtain a computer interface probe for use on one of the tool mounts. I have been unable to find a price or description for such a tool.

A: It's essentially just a computer cable, which come standard on most all *Star Wars* computers. A fair price would be about 25 credits.

Q: In the game my group is playing, an incident occurred in which a 5-kilometer-long Star Destroyer was intentionally flown into New Republic-controlled Coruscant, hitting the Imperial Palace. In your opinion, what would be the effects of this? I theorized that either the whole of Coruscant would be destroyed or that the world's shielding and turbo laser protection would destroy most of the craft, resulting in damage only to the Imperial Palace.



A: Technically speaking, a collision of an object that large onto a planet with atmosphere would destroy a very large chunk of the planet (leaving a blast crater a few kilometers deep, with a blast radius a few hundred kilometers across) and fill the atmosphere with pollutants. All life on Coruscant would probably be wiped out within a matter of days, if not hours or even minutes.

But, that being said, this is *Star Wars*, not *Deep Impact*, so it's really up to the GM whether or not he wants the entire planet to be destroyed by such an event.

Q: What kind details can Miraluka see with sense surroundings? Can they, through the Force, perceive any details on computer monitors, colors, holograms, and so on?

A: No. Sense surroundings is similar to sonar; you can perceive the size and location of objects, but not fine details.

Q: Can you take 10 on a Dissipate Energy Fortitude save?

A: No. The rules on saving throws specifically state that you can't take 10 (or take 20, for that matter). Saving throws are, by their nature, only made when you're being threatened, and you can't take 10 when you're being threatened. Being shot at with some sort of energy weapon definitely qualifies.

Q: I was recently reading about Luke Skywalker at www.starwars.com and noticed something interesting in the middle of the page: "The aftermath of Hoth scattered the Rebels, and Luke was stationed at temporary bases on Golrath and Arbra. Ascending to the command of Rogue Squadron, Luke fell in love with one of his squadron-mates, the talented and enigmatic Shira Brie. During a heated battle, Luke's targeting computer was knocked out of commission, and he instead relied on the Force to pick his targets. Inexplicably, the Force told him to fire on a friendly vessel, and he shot Shira Brie out of the sky." That brings us to my question: What type of Force skill and/or feat did he use?

A: None, I'd say. This, to me, is a case where the GM said, "You get a strong feeling from the Force . . ." which doesn't require anything except that the GM wants the player to make a certain decision. Remember, in *any* roleplaying game (and especially in one that has something so mysterious as the Force), the GM can give the players information and let them choose how to interpret it and how to act on it, without the players choosing to make a check or roll.

Q: One of my players has a Noghri Jedi hero. He desperately wants to use a double-bladed lightsaber and claims he can do so, since the weapon is Medium-sized. But when I watched Episode I again, I noticed that Maul's lightsaber almost looks too big for him (and he's a Medium-sized character) Would a Small character be able to use a double-bladed lightsaber?

A: Well, it's listed as a Medium weapon, so yes. It would just require that the Small character use both hands.

Q: What's the size limit (if any) on blaster bolts that can be deflected by a Jedi? For instance, could my Jedi guardian deflect blaster bolts fired at him from a starfighter or space transport turret? I haven't seen any rules for this.

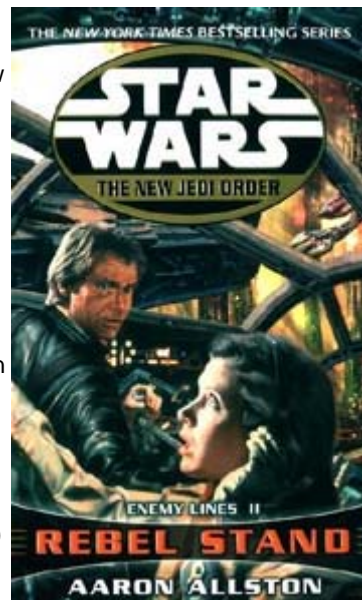
A: The original core rulebook stated that only personal-scale weapons could be deflected, not ship-scale weapons. I'm not sure why that bit of text was omitted, but the rule still holds true: A Jedi can't deflect a blaster bolt (or similar projectile) that originates from a starship of any category (starfighter, space transport, or capital ship).

Q: My friend just finished reading the book *Rebel Stand*, in which a dark Jedi fights the heroes. The dark Jedi is equipped with a lightsaber on each knee and elbow. Would it be possible to set this up in a *Star Wars* game? If so, how would it work?

A: I'd probably treat it rather like "armor spikes" in **D&D**: You can deal the damage (2d8 points, in the case of lightsabers) with a successful grapple attack. You could also make a regular melee attack (or off-hand attack) with the lightsabers, in which case they'd count as "one-handed" weapons.

Q: A player in my campaign needed an extremely high roll for a specific action that would save the lives of multitudes. He asked if he could burn both a light side and a dark side Force point at the same time. Is this in an existing errata? The revised core rulebook mentions the benefit to burning either/or but does not specifically say you can't do both at the same time.

A: I think you may be misreading the rules a bit. You *cannot* "burn" (or spend) a *Dark Side Point*. You can only spend Force Points, though you can call on the dark side to get a better result (at lower levels, anyway). DSPs measure how evil a character is; they are a drawback, not a benefit, to dark-side



characters.

So, then, the answer to your question is no, since you can only spend one Force Point per round, and calling on the Force and calling on the dark side both require spending a Force Point.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 18: Cortosis Bullets

[JD Wiker](#)

Ever try firing a cortosis bullet at a Jedi to knock out his lightsaber? Read what designer JD Wiker thinks of the idea in this installment of "Jedi Counseling," the regular column in which JD answers player questions about the [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#). This time around, JD also provides starship weapon ranges, explains how comlinks work, and suggests ways to stop your players from changing *Star Wars* history.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: What, in game terms, is the difference between "knocked out" and "unconscious"? Given that being knocked out is simply a state of induced unconsciousness, isn't this just semantics?

A: No. "Unconscious" means "at less than 0 wound points," which includes slowly losing wound points (unless the character recovers). "Knocked out" means "insensate, but not losing wound points."

Q: It occurred to me that cortosis alloy might be a good material for slugthrower rounds. Typically, your multifire gunslinging type doesn't have a good chance against a Jedi because of the Jedi's various deflecting abilities. Well, wouldn't deflecting a slug made of cortosis alloy shut off the lightsaber and prevent it from being used to help block further shots? And is this even viable? I mean, granted they would be some very expensive bullets . . . but also big on the surprise factor. What's the call?

A: That's actually a very clever and imaginative strategy. The cost for such bullets should be about 1,000 times the usual cost (5 credits for 50 slugs), for a total of 5,000 credits. I'd rule, though, that cortosis bullets couldn't be combined with any other type of ammunition variant, such as explosive ammunition, mercy ammunition, or pyro ammunition.



Q: In the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook, under the individual ship descriptions, instead of giving maximum weapon ranges and modifiers, it just says "See Table 11-8." However, on the sidebar on page 227, it says that under the range modifiers it's supposed to read "n/a" when the ship can't fire at that range. So it makes it seem that all starship weapons have the same range. Could you give me the max ranges for the starships in the book?

A: Sounds like you've got a copy of the [second printing](#) of the revised core rulebook, which has a known error there. The correct ranges for the various weapons are listed below:

Blasters

Blaster cannon	Short
Triple blaster	Short

Lasers

Point laser cannon	Point Blank
Laser cannon	Short
Quad laser cannon	Short

Turbolasers

Turbo quadlasers	Short
Double turbolaser cannon	Long

Medium turbolaser	Long
Quadlasers	Long
Turbolaser	Long

Ion Cannons

Light ion cannon	Short
Ion cannon	Medium

Other Weapons

Tractor beam projector	Short
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Q: The Jedi are quick enough to be able to deflect blaster bolts and slugs. Wouldn't it be reasonable to assume that they would be able to catch a thrown grenade (which moves a great deal more slowly) with a Move Object check, provided that they were aware of the attack?

A: Yes, but not quite how you think. A Jedi could ready an action to use Move Object on an item that's *about* to be thrown, but you can't use Move Object to halt or deflect projectiles.

Q: In the [*Ultimate Alien Anthology*](#), the Anx have a special quality called anatomical awareness. It says, "An Anx who takes the Martial Arts feat deals 1d6 points of damage with an unarmed strike and threatens a critical hit on a natural roll of 18-20."

Is that correct? The damage is normal -- 1d6 points because an Anx is a large creature -- but the 18-20 critical range is not. That's the critical range normally associated with Advanced Martial Arts. So is this a misprint? If not, and if an Anx took Martial Arts, Improved Martial Arts and Advanced Martial Arts, would its critical range on an unarmed strike be 16-20, 18-20 base, +1 for Improved Martial Arts and +1 for Advanced Martial Arts? Or would it be something else?

A: It's indeed correct. The Anx's anatomical awareness ability increases the threat range of the Anx's unarmed attacks to 18-20, rather than the usual 20 one gets when taking the Martial Arts feat.

Q: I've been wondering about comlinks. Do they work more like cellular phones or two-way radios?

A: Comlinks actually work like a combination of cellular phones *and* two-way radios -- which is getting to be a fairly common phenomenon with cell phones in the real world these days. So, in essence, you can "call" anyone on a comlink, provided you know their comlink code -- sort of like their telephone number. If you've already got someone's comlink "dialed," you can use the comlink like a two-way radio to communicate with that person (at least, until one of you breaks the connection). While you're connected, your comlink only transmits when you press the "send" stud.

Q: The tech specialist, upon earning Instant Mastery, gets 4 ranks in all Intelligence-based skills. Does that mean the character now has 4 ranks in all areas of Knowledge?

A: That's a common misconception; apparently, the wording is a little too vague. What that ability's text means is: "Choose an Intelligence-based skill. You immediately gain 4 ranks in that skill."

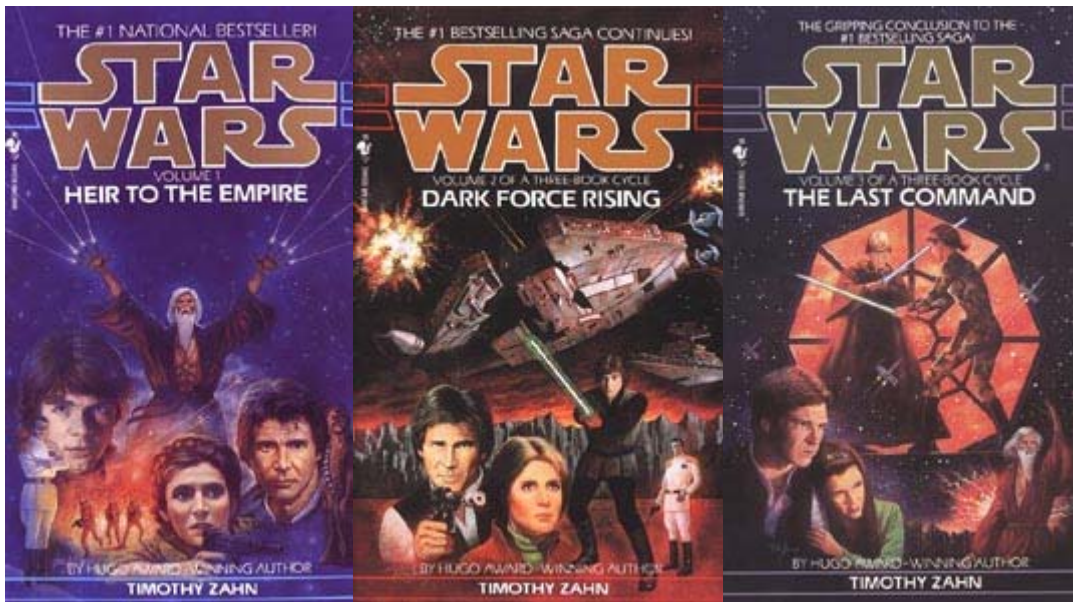
Q: In the starship combat section of the revised core rulebook, it's not really clear if "Establishing Pursuit" on an opponent counts as an attack action or a move action. We've tried letting it be a free action once on the tail of an opponent *and* making it an attack action. Thus far, making establishing pursuit an attack action seems to be the most fair and logical choice. Could you please shed some light on this issue?

A: It's actually a stunt, which means that it's a free action you can take as part of a move action.

Q: Does Frightful Presence stack with itself each round? It says you can activate it as a free action. So if someone keeps failing each round, do they get more and more frightened? If they succeed at the save, do the penalties from the previous failures vanish?

A: The -2 penalty from Frightful Presence isn't cumulative, but you can keep the effect going by using it again each round. However, if you use Frightful Presence again on someone who's already affected, that character gets to attempt another saving throw -- and if he succeeds, he sloughs off the previous effects.

Q: I ran my group through your online adventure "[Mission to Myrkyr](#)," and one of the characters grabbed a few ysalamiri -- those little "Force-dampening" creatures. He has the Handle Animal skill, so I had to agree he was within the rules to try to tame them. Well, this guy now has the best Force defense ever. He just keeps the critters nice and cozy in a backpack, and he's a walking anti-Force bubble. I think this might unbalance the game, but I don't want to be the "meanie GM." Is there anything in the rules that would disallow what he's done in a strictly technical manner? Or do I just need to have a GM-to-player chat?



A: It sounds like your player has read Timothy Zahn's "Thrawn Trilogy," in which Grand Admiral Thrawn uses ysalamiri in a cage to protect himself from Joruss C'baoth. There's nothing technically wrong with what he's done, but if you want to take the ysalamiri away, the smart thing to do is have someone simply shoot them. Or you could just have the character caught in an explosion or two. If he fails his save, his backpack -- and anything in it -- should also suffer damage.

Q: For the Improved Flight feat in the *Ultimate Alien Anthology*, it says the character gains the benefits of the next higher maneuverability class. Are there specific benefits in game terms for each maneuverability class, and, if so, where are they located?

A: Maneuverability classes for flying are found in Chapter 14, in the discussion of creatures on page 330.

Q: What if you're running a campaign and the "heroes" want to hunt down Luke Skywalker and the gang at the Battle of Yavin? Normally, I'd say it would be okay, but I want to stay true to the Rebellion Era. The characters in question have been Rebels before, but they haven't even met Luke or any of the other famous people in the story. What would you do in a situation like this?

A: Keeping the players from metagaming can be difficult when they're caught up in the excitement of their characters' potential to change the future history of the *Star Wars* universe. I can offer two tips.

First, don't let the players plan on events that they have no idea will happen. If the Battle of Yavin hasn't yet occurred, and none of the *characters* have any reason to suspect that there's a Rebel base on Yavin's moon, or that it's going to be targeted by the Death Star (which is a secret battle station, after all), don't let them just fly off to the Yavin system for no apparent reason.

Second, give them incomplete information, and let them draw inaccurate conclusions. Tell them that they know where the Rebel base is, and let them set a course for it, go into hyperspace -- and ultimately set down on Dantooine, fooled just like Grand Moff Tarkin was.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 19: Illusion Confusion 2

[JD Wiker](#)

It's the summer's biggest sequel! [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker is back to tackle *more* questions about what you can and can't do with illusions. This installment of "Jedi Counseling" also covers dueling your way to a high Reputation, wielding a lightsaber and a blaster at the same time, and more.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: Is it possible to "hide" inside an illusion? For example, could you create the illusion of a big cardboard box and stand within its space? If so, could you see out?

A: You can create the illusion of a solid object around yourself, and while you could see out without difficulty -- because you know the illusion isn't real -- those outside couldn't see in. For that matter, if you created the illusion around someone else, and that person didn't realize it was an illusion, he or she wouldn't be able to see out, either.

Q: What about creating the illusion of a stormtrooper around yourself or someone else?

A: You can do something like this by expending 3 vitality points per round (the minimum vitality point cost for an illusion). This allows you to add your ranks in Illusion to your Disguise check. Someone observing you gets the normal chance to notice the disguise (an opposed Spot check against your Disguise check), as per the Disguise rules. Spotting the disguise in this fashion qualifies as "observing and interacting with" the illusion, so the person who notices the disguise would also get a Will save against the illusion.

Q: Is it possible to create a "negative" illusion to make it appear that something is *not* there? If so, could you hide inside a moving illusion to walk down a corridor more or less invisibly?

A: You cannot use Illusion to create an image of nothing, or to hide someone or something by making that person or thing appear transparent. In short, Illusion cannot make anything invisible.

Q: I recently ran an encounter for my group in which the heroes fought a small group of Imperial assault troopers. After the fight, the heroes wanted to take the assault troopers' heavy battle armor for their own use (or to sell). But checking through the [Rebellion Era Sourcebook](#), I couldn't find any stats on it, and it's not in the revised core rulebook, either.

Can you provide those stats? For that matter, what about zero-G space trooper armor and storm commando armor?

A: Yes! Here they are:

Armor	Cost	Damage Reduction	Maximum Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Speed (10m) (6m)	Weight
Heavy Armor						
Assault Trooper	12,000	7	+0	-7	6m / 2m	35 kg
Powered Armor						
Zero-G Space Trooper	15,000	8	+0	-5	8m / 4m	40 kg
Storm Commando	20,000*	6	+2	-2	8m / 4m	20 kg

* Includes all attachments.

Q: In the [Ultimate Alien Anthology](#), the feat Improved Flight improves the flier's maneuverability class by one grade. I understand from one of your previous columns how maneuverability classes work, but this raises a new question. Do maneuverability classes apply to vehicles and starships?

A: No. They have their own rules for how often they can change direction.

Q: I ran an adventure where one of the characters was in an arena duel that was seen by 90 percent of the planet's population (because it was broadcast). The character won the fight, and as part of the story, he became famous all over the planet -- as recognizable as one of the world's top-tier athletes. As a reward, I gave him a +5 bonus to his Reputation score. Was this within the rules?

A: You might want to reconsider the size of that bonus. Given the way Reputation works in the revised core rulebook, a +5 bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, Entertain, and Gather Information checks is a *huge* bonus.



But the more important question is how to handle characters gaining recognition throughout a planet's population -- if not an even larger area. One idea would be to give the hero the equivalent of the Fame feat (a +3 bonus) until he leaves the area. He might be famous *now*, but if he takes off soon after the arena duel, he'll quickly fade from the public's perception. If the character wants the acclaim to continue even after he's moved on to another sector of the galaxy, he can always take the actual Fame feat the next time he gains a new feat slot.

Q: The revised core rulebook says to calculate a Defense Bonus, add the bonus from each class and then subtract 2. If a character had more than two classes -- let's say three for this example -- would they subtract 3? Would four classes make the character subtract 4?

A: Actually, three classes would cause the character to subtract 4 from his Defense Bonus, and four classes would cause the character to subtract 6. *Each* additional heroic class causes another -2 to the Defense Bonus. (But note the use of the expression "*heroic class*." Adding a nonheroic class such as Diplomat, Expert, or Thug doesn't incur the -2 penalty. Neither does adding a prestige class.)

Q: Most dark side feats have a prerequisite of Dark Side Points. For example, Sith Sorcery requires that the character have six or more DSPs. If I somehow lost the requisite number of DSPs, would I also lose the ability to use the Sith Sorcery feat?

A: Yes. You'd still have the feat; you just wouldn't be able to use it. In addition, any other feats or skills that had Sith Sorcery as a prerequisite would also be unavailable, until you once again qualified for the Sith Sorcery feat.

Q: Does the amount of cover or concealment available provide a bonus to Hide checks? It seems like it should, but the rules don't handle this.

A: Well, yes and no. Some sort of cover or other concealment is necessary for the Hide skill to be used at all -- you can't hide in plain sight. So, rather than providing bonuses, cover or concealment are *required* to make it possible to hide.

Q: How does a lightsaber treat the DR of a droideka's shield? Does it ignore the DR, as with just about everything else, or is there something special about the droideka's shield?



A: Nothing special, no, but the lightsaber still doesn't ignore the DR. Remember, the sidebar on lightsabers and damage reduction states that lightsabers ignore the damage reduction of *armor* when dealing damage (and even then, it only applies to personal armor, not to starship or vehicle armor).

Q: I have a player who wants his Jedi guardian to wield a lightsaber in one hand and a blaster pistol in the other. He wants to be able to deflect shots while still shooting his gun. Can he deflect shots if his saber is in his off hand?

A: Yes.

Q: As I understand it, the penalties for fighting with two weapons only apply to attacking, so that Jedi guardian character wouldn't incur a penalty just for using the Deflect (defense) ability. But what happens when he uses Deflect (attack) with the lightsaber in his off hand?

A: Using the saber in his off hand to Deflect (attack) while in the same round shooting the blaster in his primary hand would confer a -14 penalty to attack with a deflected shot -- the usual -10 off-hand penalty plus an additional -4 penalty for Deflect (attack) -- and a -6 penalty with the blaster in his main hand.

Q: Is that character's ability to deflect blaster shots affected by his having or not having the Ambidexterity and/or Two-Weapon Fighting feats?

A: Certainly. Both of those feats would reduce the penalties for using Deflect (attack) in the same round as firing the blaster. Ambidexterity alone would change the penalties to -10/-10, and Two-Weapon Fighting alone would change the penalties to -8/-12 (blaster and lightsaber, respectively). Having both feats would reduce the penalties to -8/-8.

Q: I saw your response to the issue of darksiders with epic-level powers in "Jedi Counseling" 12, but I have another question. I understand the need to restrict power levels for a balanced game system, but how creative can I be with the Force skills? I've seen Darth Bane and his apprentices shatter bones (and limbs) with the Force (in the *Jedi Vs. Sith* comic). And in the "Republic" storyline of the regular *Star Wars* comic, I've seen the dark Jedi Asajj Ventress attempt to crush another Jedi's heart using the Force. So are these just artistic flourishes, or is there a way I can use these skills in a game while maintaining a balance for good play?



A: Good question! I also read those comics, and my immediate reaction was "Force Grip." After all, the description of Force Grip states that you can use the skill to "grip an organ" as well as to "crush a larynx." Since the basic effect is to deal damage, you could consider bones "organs" for the purpose of this skill.

But to answer the slightly larger question: You can define these different specific applications of the Force as variations of Force Grip, and let players of dark side characters choose how their Force Grip manifests -- with corresponding benefits or drawbacks, depending on the situation.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 20: Boom!

[JD Wiker](#)

In the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling," [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker tackles player questions about cybernetics, how much a character can benefit from Heal Another, how Kinetic Combat really works, and why blowing yourself up with thermal detonators isn't such a good idea after all.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: I'm having a problem with one of the players in my campaign. The 13th-level soldier/elite trooper has a suicide complex. If he's ever surrounded by opponents, he sets off a thermal detonator at his feet, usually destroying his opponents but surviving the damage himself. What penalties should I place on him? I already allow no save for this tactic, but should I apply damage to his weapons and other equipment, and if so, how?

A: Certainly! First, whenever a character is exposed to an effect like this, all of his equipment has to make a save -- though, of course, it just uses the character's save, as explained on page 169 of the revised core rulebook. So, since the character doesn't get a save, neither should his equipment. That being the case, apply the damage from the thermal detonator to all of the character's equipment. You can find the DR and wound points of typical objects on Table 8-13: Damaging Objects, also found on page 169.

And if you'd like the character to stop pulling this tactic quite so often, you might rule that any other thermal detonators in his equipment also detonate when they are destroyed by the first detonation. That, or have a villain who's aware of the hero's suicidal tactic wait out of the blast radius for the soldier to conveniently damage himself.

Q: In the [Power of the Jedi Sourcebook](#), it describes a new Force power that makes plant life instantly grow and try to tangle up the user's target: Plant Surge. The book also describes a species called the Neti as a sentient species of plant. Does Plant Surge affect Neti characters?

A: Interesting strategy! I wouldn't allow it to increase a Neti's size, but I would allow Plant Surge to make use of a Neti's body to wrap, twist, and entwine around nearby creatures.

Q: I have a question about the skill Sever Force, from the [Power of the Jedi Sourcebook](#). The problems are that the skill has no duration or upkeep cost; and when I used it on a tainted Jedi, he elected to use a Dark Side Point to make the save -- which caused his DSPs to drop to one lower than half his Wisdom score, meaning he was no longer tainted. For how long is the target not able to use dark side skills or feats, and did I inadvertently just save him from evil?

A: Well, first, you can't use Dark Side Points like you use Force Points. So that wouldn't have helped the tainted Jedi one way or the other. Second, Sever Force lasts forever, or until the target reduces his number of DSPs to below half his Wisdom score -- or until his Wisdom score is greater than twice his DSPs.

Q: Can a stunned character or creature still make Reflex saves?

A: Yes.

Q: Our *Star Wars* campaign involves a lot of cybernetics, many of which our GM invented. One such item is a head-mounted computer that boosts a character's Intelligence. My character had one installed and now enjoys a higher Intelligence. My



question is this: I know that you don't get retroactive Intelligence bonuses to skill points for prior levels, but what about his current one? My character had already advanced to his current level before he got his implant, so does he get the additional skill points now, or does he have to wait until his next level?

A: He has to wait until his next level. You only add new skill points when you advance a level. So when he advances, his increased Intelligence score will calculate into his skill point total for the new level.

Q: My character has picked up some cybernetic legs -- specifically, the baseline leg package. But I don't understand the side effect of joint damage. The [Hero's Guide](#) says that my character suffers 2d4 points of damage per use. Is that for each time my character *moves*? Or is it only when he moves more than 10 meters? The same question applies to the improved legs package and the advanced legs package.

A: Neither, actually, though the second answer is closer. The damage only applies when your character uses the additional *base speed*. That is, if you decide to move 11 to 12 meters as a single move, your character suffers the listed damage. However, if you moved 11 or 12 meters in the course of a double move or a run, you wouldn't suffer the damage. But a double move of 21 to 24 meters over a full round would also cause your character to take the damage, because he's increased his base speed, as would running 41 meters or more in a full round.

Q: We're having a friendly debate over the proper treatment of the Force healing skills Heal Another and Heal Self. The general argument boils down to two questions: First, can you receive the benefits of Heal Self and Heal Another for vitality in the same hour, and for wound damage in the same day?

A: Yes, you can.

Q: Second, can you receive the benefits from Heal Another from multiple people within the time period?

A: Yes, you can.

Q: So, if multiple people can use it once each to heal a character up to full vitality inside an hour, or to full wounds within a day, why do the rules state that there's a limit to the number of times one character can use Heal Another on the same character?

A: Well, the rules assume that most adventuring groups aren't going to include more than one or two Force-using characters. The intent of the rules is not to prevent a character from being healed up to full vitality or wounds quickly, but to ensure that one Force-using character doesn't become the vitality and wound point battery for the group.

Q: I'm confused about ability point damage. How long does temporary damage last? If it does not specify, is the damage permanent?

A: Temporary damage, as explained on page 288 of the revised core rulebook, "heals" at a rate of 1 point per day.

Q: Can permanent ability damage be healed in the same manner?

A: Permanent ability damage -- resulting from an ability drain effect, for example -- does not heal, even through the use of Heal Another or Heal Self. The lost ability points never return.

Q: In *Attack of the Clones*, we see at least two different characters wielding two lightsabers (Medium weapons), yet I can find no rules explaining how to determine the penalties. In fact, I can't find any penalties for two weapons except those for using one medium and one light. Can you help me?



A: It appears you might be misinterpreting Table 8-3: Two-Weapon Fighting Penalties. The penalty for wielding two Medium weapons is the basic penalty: -6 for the primary hand and -10 for the off hand. If the character has the Ambidexterity feat, the penalties change to -6 and -6, respectively. If the character has the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, the penalties change to -4 and -8. If the character has both feats, the penalties drop to -4 and -4.

Q: What is the vitality point cost for the Kinetic Combat feat?

A: We seem to have left that part out. Using the Kinetic Combat feat to wield a lightsaber costs 1 vitality point per round -- unless, for some reason, the lightsaber weighs more than 5 kg, in which case it costs correspondingly more (as per the vitality point cost listed under the Move Object skill in the revised core rulebook).

Q: How many weapons can I wield at once with Kinetic Combat? My character wields two lightsabers using the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, and I'd like to use both using Kinetic Combat.

A: Kinetic Combat only allows you to control one weapon at a time, regardless of what other feats your character has.

Q: Can High Force Mastery be used with this to make the attacks as an attack action rather than a full-round action, thus allowing the character a regular attack as well?

A: No. High Force Mastery can't be used to give a character two attack actions in the same round.

Q: In the revised core rulebook, animals with hard skin have increased Defense. For example, a Rancor has a +13 natural bonus to Defense. A player with a Jedi character has questioned this, saying that because the "hardness" is effectively "armor," his lightsaber should ignore it. What is your take on this situation? Do you have an alternative explanation for high beast Defense/hard skin bonuses?



A: Well, no, but I do have a bit of errata that covers the situation. The "Lightsabers and Damage Reduction" sidebar on page 133 of the revised core rulebook is supposed to point out that lightsabers ignore the Damage Reduction of *personal* armor -- not vehicle armor, not starship armor, and not natural armor.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 21: Telepathy

[JD Wiker](#)

In the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling," [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker answers your questions about Defels, telepaths, and starting really big vehicles in a hurry, along with further clarifications about Kinetic Combat. Also: Why hasn't JD answered *your* question yet?



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: A player in my campaign wants to play a Defel, from the [Ultimate Alien Anthology](#). I was reading the species traits and was wondering if the "shadow" ability they have applies to gear on the character. Or would that aspect of gear only apply to that made on the homeworld?

A: A Defel's invisibility comes from its coloration, so anything not actually part of the Defel's body -- or made specifically to have the same qualities -- would not be likewise rendered invisible. Gear can be designed to share the same properties, at an additional cost of +50%, or +20% if it's constructed by a Defel. This only applies to personal equipment, though -- not vehicles or starships.

Q: So, how would gear not in "shadow" affect chances to hit the Defel with the 50% miss chance, the +2 to attacks, hide checks, and so on?

A: That would depend on how much of the Defel's equipment *isn't* constructed to be invisible. The 50% figure reflects the Defel's full concealment; the less concealed the Defel is because of his equipment, the lower the miss chance due to concealment. You should base the miss chance on what percentage of the Defel's equipment can be seen.

Q: The telepath prestige class (from the [Ultimate Alien Anthology](#)) has a Sense Motive requirement of 3 ranks, yet it is not a class skill for the telepath. Is this an oversight?

A: It would appear so. Sense Motive should be a class skill for the telepath prestige class.

Q: On the same general subject, the telepath requirement of 9 ranks of Telepathy is waived if the species has telepathy as a species trait. Does this extend to species like the Shi'ido and Quermian, which have a very limited form of telepathy? Or is it only for true telepaths like the Celegian or the Draethos?

A: So long as the species has the telepathy species trait -- or some variation of it that's still identified as "Telepathy" -- it meets the requirement of the telepath prestige class. So Shi'ido and Quermians qualify.

Q: Are telepath class abilities (such as mind shards, thought bomb, and so on) Force powers or something else? Does Force Defense aid against them?

A: They are Force powers; Force Defense can help against those that require saving throws.

Q: Can they work on something like the Yuuzhan Vong?

A: No, no more than any other Force-based mental power affects the Yuuzhan Vong.

Q: I'm a bit confused by how ion damage works against starships. It doesn't make sense to me that a Y-wing can cruise up to a Star Destroyer, take one shot, and the Star Destroyer shuts down. Am I missing something?

A: Yes -- or, rather, the revised core rulebook is. Ion weapons must first penetrate a ship's shields before they can have any kind of effect on the ship.

Q: When the crew repairs ion damage, does the damage just lessen by one degree? Or is all the damage wiped away?

A: Successfully repairing the ion damage, no matter how severe it is, returns the ship to normal operation (that is, no penalty from ionization).

Q: If you jump down intentionally from a height, can you make both a Jump and a Tumble skill check in order to treat the fall as 8 m less (4 for each check)?

A: No, it's one or the other, though the GM might give you a +2 synergy bonus for having 5 or more ranks in the other skill.

Q: Having 5 ranks in Tumble increases the bonus when fighting defensively or using full defense. Is this benefit lost when you have the Combat Expertise feat?

A: No. In fact, using Combat Expertise in conjunction with 5 or more ranks in Tumble while fighting defensively is a good idea; they all provide dodge bonuses, which stack. You can't use Combat Expertise in conjunction with total defense, however.

Q: If you are down to 1 wound point and no vitality points, can you use Heal Self to regain wound points without risking dropping yourself to 0 wound points afterward? I ask because with the "prolong Force" application of Control, a wound point is worth 2 vitality points, and you would normally only need 1 vitality point to pull this off.

A: As with all skills that cost vitality points to activate, you must pay the cost before you receive any benefits. So, if you have no vitality, activating Heal Self will effectively "damage" you before you receive any benefit from the skill. But because you had only 1 wound point, you would reduce yourself to 0 wounds, become disabled, and then recover wounds from your application of the skill.

You can choose to heal less than the full amount indicated by your die roll, so there's no danger that you might get a Heal Self result of 25 or more and be forced to spend 2 wound points, rendering yourself unconscious (and dying).

Q: If you overcharge your wound points, can you get back 2 vitality points for each point that is overcharged?

A: No. Excess wound points healed are simply lost.

Q: When using Kinetic Combat from the [Hero's Guide](#), do you no longer benefit from the Lightsaber Defense feat?



A: Using Kinetic Combat isn't the same as wielding the lightsaber in your hands. While using it, you can't make use of Lightsaber Defense (and the related feats), you can't deflect blaster shots, and you can't combine it with feats that increase your number of attacks. It doesn't create a "virtual you"; it simply lets you use Move Object to attack things with your lightsaber.

Q: Imagine a narrow corridor, 40 meters long and 6 meters wide, with characters on one end and foes on the other. In the exact center of the corridor is a 6th-level Jedi with his lightsaber ignited. Since the foes have to shoot through the Jedi's square or through the squares on either side of the Jedi to get to the allies, can the Jedi use his Deflect (extend defense and attack) lightsaber abilities even though his allies are significantly more than 2 meters behind him?

A: This is a case where it's really up to the GM's ruling, but given the parameters of this situation, I'd say it's entirely reasonable to let the Jedi use Deflect (extend defense and attack) in this fashion.

Q: Move Object says that it takes a move action to use and a full round action if used as an attack. Exactly what makes it an attack? If you tried to pull a blaster from someone's hand, is that an attack? If you move a floorboard so that someone falls through the hole, is that an attack? How about dragging a person across the floor, or dropping something from above on them?

A: One good rule to remember is that if an action normally requires an attack action to do by hand, then it counts as an "attack" for purposes of Move Object. In general, any action that more or less directly affects someone else -- hitting the opponent with a rock, pulling a weapon out of the opponent's hand, pulling the floor out from under the opponent -- should be considered an attack.

Q: In the vehicle start-up section of the revised core rulebook, it states that as a move action, you can attempt a Pilot check to reduce the start-up time by one step. The example states that for a Colossal vehicle, the minimum start-up time would be 2 rounds. But if I take my first move action of a given round to reduce the start-up from 4 rounds to 2 rounds, and my second move action to reduce it from 2 rounds to 1 round; that would mean I could quick-start a colossal vehicle in a single round. Is this right?

A: No. The most you can ever reduce the start-up time is one step from the listed minimum, no matter how many times you successfully make the Pilot check.

Q: I wrote to you a few weeks ago asking about a rule, and you haven't responded. Are you working on an

answer?

A: I should clarify that I don't provide personal answers to every question that comes to me. If you haven't seen an answer to your question in this column, it may be because I've answered it in a previous column, because the answer's in the rulebook, or, as you suggest, because the Wizards *Star Wars* team is still considering an answer.

About the Author

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Jedi Counseling 22: Sever Force

[JD Wiker](#)

In the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling," [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker answers your rules questions. Can you work out to gain Strength points? Do you need to make hand gestures when using the Force? And can you cut your Dark Side Points by throwing a good dinner party? Read on!



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: In the [Power of the Jedi Sourcebook](#), Sever Force gives details on how a person who fails the save to resist this power has a DC increase to all Force power and feat checks until they reduce their Dark Side Points to less than half of their Wisdom score.

So what happens if the character reduces his Dark Side Points, and then gains them back? Let's say that Darth Vader is affected by Sever Force, but is subsequently able to reduce his Dark Side Points to 4. Then with the negative effects gone, he goes on a murderous rampage and collects 10 additional Dark Side Points, bringing his total to 14. Does Sever Force resume increasing his DCs for using Force skills and feats? Or does Sever Force need to be used on him again for the DC penalty to be implemented?

A: The latter. Sever Force loses its hold on the target as soon as the target reduces his Dark Side Point total to less than half his Wisdom score.

Q: Can a Force-user use Move Object to make a kind of "bulletproof shield"?

A: No. None of the applications of Move Object allow the Force-user to deflect incoming attacks.

Q: I understand that multiclassing into a second class imposes a -2 penalty to Defense, but I'm pretty sure this isn't supposed to apply to prestige classes. The problem is that I can't find that clearly stated anywhere in the revised core rulebook, and my GM doesn't believe me. Where is it stated?

A: You can find that rule on page 263 of the revised core rulebook, in the first paragraph under "Creating Prestige Classes."

Q: What effect does the High Force Mastery feat have on the Spellcaster feat?

A: High Force Mastery combined with Spellcaster reduces the activation time to an attack action, and the vitality cost is reduced by one before being doubled.

Q: One of my players has taken the changeling prestige class, from the [Ultimate Alien Anthology](#), for his character. In the last game session, his character changed into a Wookiee, and the player said his character now had the strength of a Wookiee. I told him that the ability didn't work that way. Was I correct?

A: Certainly. None of the special abilities of the changeling prestige class overcome the shapeshifting restrictions



of the basic species -- particularly the one that states that changing shape does not grant the species traits of the form a shapeshifter changes to. Since species traits include bonuses or penalties to abilities, changing into a Wookiee doesn't make a character stronger.

Q: And if a character changes into a Vor, could the character fly?

A: Again, no, for the same reason.

Q: My group has just thrown the [Hero's Guide](#) into our game, and I'm ashamed to admit I was the first to try to flagrantly abuse the seeming oversight of the Empower and Maximize Force techniques by applying them to a Heal Self check. The increased VP cost amounts to none with a successful check. Is this intentional? Have you got a handy fix?

A: No, it wasn't intentional. The idea was that when multiplying the vitality cost with the Force techniques, the minimum cost is always considered 1. So using Empower Force and Maximize Force together on Heal Self has a vitality cost of 6.

Q: When using the Force, is it necessary to use hand gestures? For example, a player in my campaign was paralyzed and being dragged. He then used Force Strike on the creature dragging him and was able to kill it. I argued that he should at least get a penalty. What's the rule on this?

A: You are, of course, free to levy a penalty on skill checks as you like, but the official rules don't actually penalize a Force-user for not using hand gestures when wielding the Force.

Q: One of my players wanted to pull his lightsaber to him from a walkway 30 meters away. The problem is that the revised core rulebook states that an object to be lifted must be within 10 meters. My player reasoned that because he could see it, because it was lightweight, and because he had a connection to it through the Force, he should be able to pull the lightsaber to him. I have read in some of the books that Jedi have moved objects to them from vast distances; one example is Kyp Durrón pulling the Sun Crusher from the center of the gas giant Yavin. Is there a house rule I can make, or should I just stick to the rules?

A: You should *always* feel free to make a house rule if you believe that your campaign needs it. We chose the 10-meter limit for Move Object specifically because the characters who use it in the movies never use it at a range of greater than 10 meters, and when the books and movies conflict, we generally go with the movie version. (The scene of Yoda lifting Luke's X-wing in *The Empire Strikes Back* is a bit unclear as to the distances involved, but it could be argued that a significant part of it was within 10 meters.)

Q: I've been reading the errata from early June and I have a question about multiclassing. If I want to multiclass into the Force adept, Jedi guardian, or Jedi consular class, do I still need to take the Force-Sensitive feat beforehand, or do I get it for free? As I understand the new rules, Force-Sensitive is no longer a prerequisite for multiclassing into a Force-using class.

A: I think you may have misread the errata on the multiclassing rules. The errata doesn't change the fourth paragraph under "Adding a Second Class," which still states that a character who wishes to add a Force-using class must purchase the Force-Sensitive feat, rather than acquiring it for free as a starting feat.

Q: The second printing of the revised core rulebook changes the multiclassing rules so that now a character receives not just one feat, but all starting feats. This rule change is fine for most characters, but it seems a gross advantage when applied to a droid that can reprogram its feats. It appears that a droid need only take a level in the soldier class to gain six new feats, each of which can be reprogrammed to something more useful.

How can this be fixed? One option I've thought of is to declare that duplicate feats are lost. For example, if a

droid already has Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols) and multiclasses into the soldier class, the droid doesn't gain Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols) again, so there's no chance to reprogram it to something else.

A: Actually, that's the way the rule works already. When a character -- droid or not -- gains a feat that he already has, he simply doesn't gain the new feat. So a droid couldn't be reprogrammed to replace the second occurrence of Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols).

Q: How does a pilot eject from a starfighter? In the novels (principally in the X-Wing series), the X-wing pilots have a personal magcon field capable of holding a thin atmosphere around the pilot for some time. How long does the atmosphere last? And what check does he make to eject from the ship before it explodes? A Reflex save, maybe?

A: That seems to be an omission in the general rules for starship combat. I'd rule that whenever a starfighter takes damage sufficient to completely destroy it, the pilot may attempt a DC 18 Reflex save to activate the ejector mechanism, popping the canopy and propelling himself clear of the ship. The energy cells powering the attached magcon field would last approximately half an hour.

Q: A player in my group thinks characters can gain Strength points by working out. Is that possible?

A: In a sense, one can gain a point of Strength by working out, but that's what gaining a point in a single ability every four levels represents: working out, practicing acts of physical agility, studying, and so forth. Just declaring that a character is working out is not sufficient to gain an increase to an ability score.

Q: Say I use a bantha rush to push my opponent into a square occupied by some hazard -- a chasm, a chemical spill, hazardous machinery, or the like. Is my opponent automatically affected by such hazards because my bantha rush succeeded, or does he get a saving throw of some sort to negate or reduce hazard damage?

A: He's affected by the hazard as though he had moved into the square voluntarily. That is, if the hazard offers a saving throw, he gets a saving throw. Merely being pushed into the square doesn't prevent the target from getting a save.

Q: How much light does a lightsaber provide in total darkness?

A: Good question. I'd rule that a lightsaber's glow provides illumination in a 2-meter radius.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 23: Twi'lek Lobotomies

[JD Wiker](#)

How do you lobotomize a Twi'lek? No, that's not the opening line of a joke -- it's just one of the issues addressed by [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling," the column that answers your rules questions. JD also covers the sharpshooter prestige class, Move Object, and the morality of selling Neimoidians into slavery.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: If a Twi'lek character is shot in (or loses) a head tail, could there be side effects, such as losing points of Intelligence?

A: Since part of a Twi'lek's brain is located in his head tails, losing a head tail would be a bit like a partial lobotomy. The Twi'lek might lose some Intelligence (due to being unable to recall old memories and such) and perhaps even Dexterity (because he might have lost some motor skills). He'd certainly be less effective at communicating in lekku, the "sign language" that Twi'leks use their head tails to "speak." Just how serious the effects are is up to the GM.



Q: I have some questions about Dark Side Points. I play a Force adept. During a fight in a weather control tower (from "Shadows of Coruscant" in the original core rulebook), the character used Move Object to throw one of the Flail terrorists out the window, sending him falling to his death. I didn't think that such a brutal course of action was necessary, but I was wondering if the character should gain a Dark Side Point.

A: The question of whether or not to award a Dark Side Point for killing a sentient being really boils down to this: Could you have stopped him another way? If not, then you did what you had to do, and the Force isn't going to "punish" you for using it to resolve a situation that, after all, *the Force itself* engineered!

But if you could have stopped the Flail terrorist by simply shooting him, pulling the weapon out of his hand, or something like that, then the question becomes: Did you realize that at the time? Again, the Force isn't going to punish you for reacting to the situation without thinking, though the Jedi High Council might scold you for it.

However, if you did realize that you could have stopped the terrorist some other way, but you chose to fling him to his death -- well, then, you made a conscious decision to kill a sentient being unnecessarily. And yes, you deserve a Dark Side Point for that.

Q: Okay, I can understand that. How about relentlessly taunting someone? For example, what if my Force adept constantly makes fun of an Aqualish in the group? Is that worth a Dark Side Point?

A: I think here we're back to a basic childhood lesson about sticks and stones. Taunting someone mercilessly doesn't make you a dark-sider, no matter how many times you do it. It just makes you a jerk. But if the purpose of the taunting is to provoke a fight with the target of your jokes, then you're definitely treading close to the boundary.

Q: One more then: We were playing the Naboo adventure out of the *Star Wars Adventure Game*. During a mission, the heroes killed one Neimoidian guard and knocked the other one out. Afterward, they arranged to sell the Neimoidian into slavery. Now, since he was working for the Trade Federation and was trying to harm the people of Naboo, does this count as something that should get the characters Dark Side Points, or is this just the price the Neimoidian has to pay for his misdeeds?

A: Yikes! Yes, certainly they'd get Dark Side Points! Not only is slavery illegal in the Republic -- the Republic in which Naboo and Neimoidia are both located -- but turning someone into a slave is outright immoral. (That's why only the *bad guys* in the *Star Wars*



movies and novels keep slaves.)

You might need to point out to your gaming group that the "frontier justice" mentality they're operating under is a bit antithetical to the whole "heroic fantasy" idea. Seems like they might've missed the point somewhere along the line.

Q: The sharpshooter prestige class from the [Hero's Guide](#) seems just a little different from the one that was in *Star Wars Gamer* #10. Now my sharpshooter isn't quite as good as he used to be. For instance, it now takes a full round action to use ranged sneak attack. Do we have to use the new version of the sharpshooter?

A: Well, obviously, you never *have* to use any of the rules in the rulebooks and sourcebooks. As always, that's between you and your gaming group.

But I noticed that the sharpshooter had changed as well, so I contacted the editor and the original designer, Gary Sarli, and we worked out a couple of solutions to make the sharpshooter every bit as good as it was before:

- Using the sharpshooter's ranged sneak attack ability no longer requires a full-round action, but the ability only applies to one attack that the sharpshooter makes during a given round.
- If you use the Aiming rule (from page 133 of the *Hero's Guide*), you can begin aiming before combat begins, at your GM's discretion. Obviously, you can't begin to aim if you don't have your weapon ready. But if you're in position, with your weapon pointed at a specific 2m x 2m square, you should be able to use the Aiming rule.
- If a sharpshooter has begun aiming before combat and fires his weapon during the surprise round, the sharpshooter is allowed to add his sneak attack damage.

Q: That covers the ranged sneak attack. But what about the rules for the targeting scope? No other improved weapon sight requires a full round to use. So why does the targeting scope?

A: We discussed that question as well, and agreed that it was an unnecessary addition to the rules. Use the original text from *Star Wars Gamer* #10: "Using a scope mounted on a readied weapon is a free action that can provoke an attack of opportunity."

Q: The description of the telepath prestige class in the [Ultimate Alien Anthology](#) implies that members of nontelepathic species use the Force for their telepathic abilities. Since Mind Shard deals damage, does it cause the user to gain Dark Side Points? What about the other class abilities that could be considered attacks?

A: Unless an ability specifically states that Dark Side Points result from using it, then no -- the user generally does not gain DSPs. Merely causing damage isn't a reliable indicator that an ability is "of the dark side." After all, using a lightsaber doesn't give a Jedi any Dark Side Points, but if the Jedi uses his lightsaber to kill without mercy or torture intelligent beings, that would certainly be cause for Dark Side Points. It's the same way with Mind Shard and similar abilities.

Q: Can the Move Object skill be used to catch someone who is falling?

A: I'm going to reverse an earlier ruling I made, back in [Jedi Counseling #18](#), regarding using Move Object to catch thrown weapons (such as grenades):

Yes, you can use Move Object to catch something that is falling or being thrown, but only if you have readied an action to do so. The DC and vitality cost for the skill check is based on weight, as normal. You can elect to stop the object's movement anywhere within 10 meters of yourself. Catching the item is an attack action, so you cannot immediately manipulate the object. For example, you couldn't catch a grenade and throw it back at the person who threw it, all as the same action.



I wouldn't say, however, that this is what Yoda did in his battle with Count Dooku at the end of *Attack of the Clones*. There, Yoda readied his actions to use Move Object to contest Dooku for control of the objects that Dooku was attempting to use to kill Obi-Wan Kenobi and Anakin Skywalker -- and those rules are already in the game on page 95 of the revised core rulebook.

Q: I am running a *Star Wars* campaign and understand the rules fairly well. However, one thing I am not sure about is how to resolve certain effects relating to vitality points and wound points -- poison, for example. If a character with full vitality and wound points gets bitten by a divto, there is supposed to be a chance that he is poisoned. But if he is at full vitality, he should technically dodge the bite and only suffer wound damage once his vitality points are exhausted. So why would he suffer any adverse effect from the poisonous bite if he actually dodged it?

A: He wouldn't. Any poison or venom attack that relies on injury to take effect requires that the victim take wound damage first. So an attack by a divto that "hits" might just graze the victim, but not actually break the skin. But if the divto were to score a critical against the victim, the poison would function as listed.

Q: Okay, then what about falling damage? If you fell from 20 meters and hit the ground with full vitality, are you only "grazed" by the ground?

A: Assuming you succeeded at your Reflex save (see page 289 of the revised core rulebook), then yes, you'd actually be controlling your fall: rolling at the point of impact, going limp so as to avoid breaking your limbs, and so forth.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 24: Dazed and Stunned

[*JD Wiker*](#)

What can your hero do when he's dazed? How about when he's stunned? In the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling," [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker straightens you out and also covers the new heroic feats Ranged Disarm and Up the Walls, buying droid processors, mind probing with Telepathy, and more.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: Does unsheathing a sword count as a free action, or is it some other kind of action?

A: Drawing a weapon -- which includes taking a sword out of its sheath or scabbard -- is a move action.

Q: Say some stormtroopers are assaulting a consular ship and are attacking en masse down the corridor. One kneels down, and another kneels down right behind him. Now, page 163 of the revised core rulebook says a kneeling character gets one-quarter cover, and a character behind another character is given one-half cover. What if both are kneeling?

A: It seems reasonable that the character kneeling in the "second rank" would get three-quarters cover, and I could even see calling that nine-tenths cover in the right circumstances (say, if they're both kneeling inside a tight air duct). But another character kneeling behind the first two would get the next degree of cover (from three-quarters to nine-tenths, for example), so eventually, there would be so many kneeling characters in the way that the ones in the rear couldn't fire past the ones in the front.

Q: For the purposes of gaining the feats Sense, Alter, and Control, would levels in the findsman prestige class fit the profile of a Force-using class?

A: Yes. The findsman must be Force-sensitive to even acquire the prestige class, and he gets Sense for free as a starting feat, so that definitely qualifies.

Q: When a person is stunned, is she capable of taking actions based on Force skills and feats? You stated previously that a paralyzed character could still take an action that used the Force.

A: The answer lies in the wordings of the two different conditions. A paralyzed character is "unable to move" -- meaning the character cannot leave the square he's in, or use his limbs to pick up and wield weapons.

A stunned character, on the other hand, "can take no attack or move actions." Since most Force skills and feats require either an attack or move action, a stunned character cannot use Force abilities.

Q: Also, there is a clear difference in wording between "dazed" and "stunned" -- specifically, "dazed" says you may take no actions, and "stunned" says you may not take move or attack actions. Does "no move or attack actions" literally mean that you cannot move or attack? Or does it mean that you may not take actions which are the equivalent of move or attack actions, like most Force abilities?



A: It means the latter: You cannot do anything that requires you to take a move or attack action. The wording of "dazed," then, means that you can take no move action, no attack actions, *and* no free actions.

Q: One of our players was recently creating a droid character -- a J9 worker drone -- and we hit a snag in the rules. After the player rolled his stats and applied his ability modifiers (for a fifth-degree droid), he told us that since his droid's "normal" stat for Intelligence is a 16, he also gets to add a +6 to the 18 he assigned to his droid's Intelligence. Now he has a droid with an Intelligence of 24. That doesn't seem right! But he insisted that droids work basically just like races in the *Monster Manual* for *Dungeons & Dragons*, so they have racial adjustments. We were about to throw the *Monster Manual* at him. Is this really how it works?

A: No, but the player gets an "A" for the creative interpretation of rules from a different game. A droid's degree is its race; the ability modifiers listed there are what he gets, and that's all. But even that assumes that the player is creating an entirely new type of droid that just falls into that category of droids. If you select a J9 droid as your character, all of your droid's ability scores, base skill points, feats, and equipment are right there in the droid's description. You don't generate new ability scores, starting money, or anything normally involved in the character generation process (unless you're creating a droid with experience).

Q: I know the core rulebook lists two types of processors that you can buy for droids: the remote processor and the heuristic processor. But is there a "standard" processor? If so, how much would I pay for one?

A: Indeed there is. The standard droid processor is the default processor for any droid that doesn't have a processor listed. Since all droids are somewhat different, though, it's difficult to put a single price tag on that piece of equipment. I'd say that 100 credits per point of Intelligence is a fair price.

Q: I have a question about the [Hero's Guide](#). I don't understand how the Infiltrator's Uncanny Hide ability works. Supposedly, you can try to hide if caught unaware in a surprise round, assuming you are not being directly observed. If I'm reading this right, it means the Infiltrator can hide when she doesn't know she is being attacked by people who haven't seen her yet.

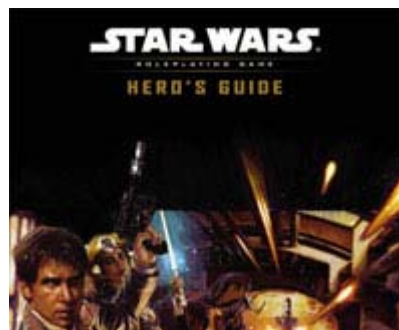
So, how come you can only hide when unaware? (I assume that if you are aware you can just use your action to hide normally, but then you also need to win initiative. Right?) And I honestly can't think of many scenarios where you would be surprised by anyone who isn't directly observing you -- and if they are not observing you, what's stopping you from hiding? I'm especially confused, considering that this is a level 10 prestige class special ability.

A: The Infiltrator's Uncanny Hide ability is one that certainly challenges people's perceptions about how the surprise round works. Let's take a look at the Surprise rules on page 151 of the revised core rulebook.

First, being aware of your opponents in the surprise round doesn't necessarily mean that you're looking at them. You can become aware of opponents by making a Listen check.

Second, even if you become aware of your opponents with a Spot check, there's a difference between "aware" and "directly observing." Say you make your Spot check and notice a group of four characters coming toward you. During the surprise round, you attack one of them in melee combat. Now, the one you attacked is the only one you're directly observing. You're aware of the rest of them, but you're not directly observing them. If one of them is a 10th-level Infiltrator, she can wait until you (and all your companions) are busy with other opponents to declare that she is using her Uncanny Hide ability.

Q: Here's a question about the Ranged Disarm feat in the *Hero's Guide*. It allows you to use the disarm action with a specific ranged weapon. Now, if you are trying to disarm an opponent who is holding a ranged weapon, you use the "Attack an Object" rules rather than the Disarm rules (which you can do whether you have the feat or not), so is the Ranged Disarm feat meant to be a feat specifically designed to shoot melee weapons out of people's hands? That seems like an unnecessarily narrow focus for a feat, especially considering the usual emphasis on ranged weapons in the game. Not to mention that it doesn't make much sense. Have I misunderstood the intent of the feat?



A: Not exactly -- you've misunderstood how disarming a ranged weapon works normally. When the rules talk about "Attack an Object" and mention the ranged weapon falling to the ground if your attack succeeds, that refers to making a *melee* attack against the weapon. That's not saying that you can accomplish the same thing with a ranged attack. So the Ranged Disarm feat lets you use the disarm action against a ranged or melee weapon up to 10 meters away -- with the same ultimate effect as if you'd used a melee weapon to disarm the opponent.

Q: I noticed an extremely nice feat in the *Hero's Guide* -- Up the Walls. It says you can use movement actions in conjunction with the feat, but can you jump? I'm thinking of all those movies where someone runs directly at a wall, then runs up it and jumps off into a flip.

A: Any time you use a movement action that takes you away from the wall while using Up the Walls, you leave the wall and return to the ground. You *could* use a jump to do so, but what you're describing is more like an aspect of the Tumble skill, since ordinary people -- well, ordinary people who are both coordinated and in good shape -- can do it, without using the Force.

Q: One of my players wanted to use the Telepathy skill to read the surface thoughts of a local smuggler to see if the smuggler was lying. He argued that he could use Telepathy as a sort of "mind probe" because Jedi do just that in the novels after the death of the Emperor. Can he do that? It seems a bit overpowered to me.

A: Well, he *can* use the Force to see if someone is lying -- but that's not Telepathy; it's Empathy. Empathy grants a bonus to Sense Motive checks, and Sense Motive is the operative skill for detecting lies.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 25: Dark Side Downside

[JD Wiker](#)

Wondering how to run a dark side game, or just how to saddle your heroes with Dark Side Points? What are light side skills? How do Jedi archetypes work? Can Gungans become Jedi? Designer JD Wiker answers your [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) rules questions in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: I'm running a dark side game in which the players are evil servants of the Emperor and hunting Jedi, and I'm finding it difficult to manage the awarding of Dark Side Points. They want to use the dark side skills and be evil, but the penalties are harsh and it seems out-of-character to do something heroic to stave off DSP accumulation when they have no interest in being heroic. Is defending the Empire against the Jedi High Council heroic if your politics are skewed?

A: Sounds like your players have fallen victim to the myth of power that the dark side offers. Surprise! It really is a bad idea to acquire Dark Side Points faster than you acquire Force Points.

Though you could set up the campaign so that the heroes are brave forces of law and order defending the civilized galaxy from Jedi "terrorists," the fact remains that the heroes are actively hunting and killing the galaxy's last few "good guys." It would make a good basis for a redemption-themed campaign -- "We stopped that Jedi terrorist from blowing up the power plant and killing half the station's crew, so why don't we get Force Points?" "Perhaps you should ask the Emperor." -- but it creates too much ambiguity for a straight "good-versus-evil" campaign.

However, if you want your players' characters to use dark side abilities, but you don't want them to rack up DSPs so fast, you could award them DSPs only for the first time they use the dark side abilities, and not again for the same skill until they beat their last die roll. So they have to keep track of their best rolls (or, better, you do), and if, for example, a player's roll of 22 with Force Grip beats his previous "top score" of 20 with the same skill, then he gets another DSP. Just a suggestion.

Q: Here's an additional question: Say the Emperor orders Grand Moff Tarkin to destroy Alderaan. Tarkin orders an officer to pull the switch. Who gets the DSP? All of them? Or were the lower two merely following orders?

A: Yikes! That line of reasoning didn't work at Nuremburg, and it won't work in the *Star Wars* universe, either. All three of them would get DSPs (though in *A New Hope*, it was actually Grand Moff Tarkin's decision; the Emperor didn't order it).



Q: Apologies if you've already answered this, but I've gone through several of your archives and I haven't seen this addressed anywhere. The rules in Chapter Nine state: "A tainted character . . . takes a -4 penalty on any Force skill checks made to use light side Force skills." But what exactly are light side skills? Everything that isn't dark? Or only obviously good things like Compassion and Heal Another?

A: This has been addressed before, but not since *Star Wars Gamer* #10, and it's worth mentioning again.

Light side skills are actually labeled in the same way as dark side skills. It's just that only one of them appears in the core rulebook -- Heal Another -- so it's hard to spot. Taken by itself, this is a really small disadvantage to dark-siders. But when you add in all of the light side skills that appear in the [Power of the Jedi Sourcebook](#), the decision to embrace the dark side becomes a little less easy.

Q: The [Hero's Guide](#) gives the archetype example of the Jedi wanderer, which my group thinks is really cool. But this has created a split at our table. Half believe it's an example for creating unique heroes, and the other half think it's a concrete class with no flexibility, since Jedi cannot multiclass. Which interpretation is correct?

A: Honestly, I don't think either is entirely correct, but the first interpretation comes closest. The archetypes are suggestions on how to build a certain type of character -- in this case, a Jedi who is on a grand tour of the galaxy. Players have some flexibility to change the specific order in which they take the Jedi consular and scoundrel classes, and GMs have some flexibility in that they can use the Jedi wanderer (or any archetype) to build their own archetypes: perhaps "Jedi nomad" with levels of Jedi guardian and scout, for example.

But remember that the actual rule about Jedi and multiclassing is that Jedi consulars can't multiclass into Jedi guardian, and vice versa. If the campaign is set during the Rise of the Empire era or before, it's somewhat reasonable to say that Jedi can't stop being Jedi at all, ever, but that's a rule of the Jedi High Council, not the game.

Q: Are the Miraluka a playable race? And, if so, is their Force sight negated by Force-deadening powers? With this sight, are they effectively able to see 360 degrees, and thus can't be surprised?

A: Well, technically, everyone can see 360 degrees; there's no facing in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*. You have an equal chance to Spot something going on behind you as in front of you.

But I get a lot of questions about the Miraluka and their ability to see using only the Force, and it's prompted me to write up some clarifications and rulings (with help from the fine folks on my message boards):

- Miraluka have a species ability to see normally in the Force. That includes being able to make Spot and Search checks, as well as being able to read, write, and otherwise act like someone who can see normally.
- They are affected by line of sight, just like normally sighted beings. The major difference is that Miraluka can "see" in the dark.
- This ability is not the same thing as the Sense application Sense Surroundings (contrary to what it says in the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, which is why the ability is redefined in the [Ultimate Alien Anthology](#)). Sense Surroundings is a pale imitation of the Miraluka "Force Sight" ability.
- To clarify, then, what Sense Surroundings does: It can't give you details. It's more like radar or sonar imaging: You see bright spots where there are living things, and these bright spots are shaped more or less like what they are. So you can distinguish a Wampa from a tauntaun, but not one Wookiee from another Wookiee.
- Sense Surroundings can't detect things that are "invisible" in the Force, like Yuuzhan Vong or ysalamiri.
- The Miraluka's Force Sight ability has this same drawback: Yuuzhan Vong and ysalamiri are "invisible" to them. Inside Yuuzhan Vong structures, where the Force seems to be blocked somehow, a Miraluka is effectively truly blind -- just as a Miraluka would be inside the "bubble" created by ysalamiri.



Q: If a character fails the saving throw of Affect Mind and is affected, will he have memories of that? Can he be angry over having been subjected to the power? Would it color how he deals with Jedi afterward?

A: The target of Affect Mind will certainly have memories of doing or saying whatever the Jedi told him to do or say, but, according to the text of Affect Mind: "The target won't realize later that what he did was unreasonable."

Now, that being said, the character might catch on that he wasn't given a conscious choice in the matter, and that he was the victim of a Jedi mind trick. Can the character be angry about it? Certainly. Would the character be less trusting of the Jedi afterward? That's a fair response.

Q: If a Jedi Guardian has the ability to make Mastercraft Items (either through tech specialist levels or Jedi artisan levels), could he disassemble his own previously crafted lightsaber and rebuild it as a mastercraft +1 item?

A: Certainly! It's really no different from building a completely new one.

Q: I've been reading the *Hero's Guide*, and I have a question about the Lord of the Expanse prestige class. According to the chart, at 2nd level, a Lord of the Expanse gets the minion special ability, but in the text it says that you get minions at 4th level. Which is correct?

A: The table is correct. Lords of the Expanse get the minions special ability at 2nd level.

Q: Could a character of any species become a Jedi? Someone told me that a Gungan could not become a Jedi even if he met all the requirements. Although this person isn't my group's GM, he is a big *Star Wars* fan. Is he correct in assuming that being a Jedi has a Gungan species restriction?

A: Not at all. He's either pulling your leg or speaking from ignorance. There is no rule in any of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* books that states that Gungans cannot become Jedi. If a species can have the Force-Sensitive feat, its members can become Jedi or Force adepts. There are some species that can't become Jedi, but Gungans aren't among them.



About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 26: Eye On Ion

[JD Wiker](#)

Can a Jawa ionize an AT-ST with one shot from an ion rifle? Can a telepath use Force Grip through his psychic avatar? Do **Dungeons & Dragons** 3.5 rules apply to *Star Wars*? Will designer JD Wiker answer these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) rules questions and more in this installment of "Jedi Counseling"? (Hint: Yes.)



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: Personal ion weapons affect walkers or droidlike vehicles as defined in the [Arms & Equipment Guide](#). Can a Jawa use an ion rifle to ionize an AT-ST in one shot with a good damage roll?

A: Actually, you seem to be applying the starship ion weapon rules to vehicles when, in fact, there are no official rules for how personal ion weapons affect vehicles or starships. The ion energy has to reach the electronic components -- not just the hull -- to have an effect. And while personal ion weapons are perfectly capable of shorting out droids and small electronic devices, they are nowhere near as powerful as their starship-mounted counterparts.

A personal ion weapon can really only affect a vehicle if the weapon is fired directly at the vehicle's electronic components: the control surfaces, usually, or the actuators. Just hitting the vehicle doesn't do the trick, nor would it have any effect on a starship.

Q: Do vehicles or starships with ion weapons treat damage to anything electrical they shoot (such as a building's systems) as if it were another ship or vehicle, referencing the ion damage table?

A: I suppose you could handle it that way, for simplicity's sake. Of course, technically speaking, buildings don't move or attack, so all you'd really be doing is shutting down a few electronics here and there.

Q: Do vehicles receive their damage reduction against ion weapons?

A: No, they do not -- not if the ion weapon is used as I indicated above. When merely firing an ion weapon at a vehicle, it's rather a moot point; the ion energy doesn't affect the vehicle, anyway.

Q: Does a vehicle or starship stop when ionized, or does it continue moving at its last vector for a few squares due to its momentum?

A: Realistically, yes, it would keep moving.

Q: Does existing ionization stack with newly received ionization damage, raising the DC to Repair it?

A: Yes.

Q: From a previous "Jedi Counseling" answer, I assume a starship's shields DR and shield points have to be gone through in order for ion damage to affect the ship, so do ion weapons damage the shields as normal ship weapons do? And does excess damage move to the chart to cause ionization?

A: Correct.

Q: Is an ionization Repair check considered a jury rig, meaning the ship or vehicle is ionized again at the end of the scene?

A: It's a regular repair, though it could be jury-rigged, as well.

Q: When using the psychic avatar ability of the telepath prestige class (from the [Ultimate Alien Anthology](#)), can you use Force Grip through the avatar? I know that it states you cannot manipulate physical objects when using the avatar, but Force Grip has no restriction on distance; all you need is the ability to see the target. The argument we have is that you may be able to Force Grip a target sensed through the psychic avatar because Force Grip will originate from your comatose body.

A: No -- your body is, as you say, *comatose*. It no longer houses the center of your consciousness; your psychic avatar does. The psychic avatar cannot use skills that manipulate physical objects, and Force Grip counts.

Q: So let's say I'm a telepath, and I can't project my psychic avatar into the next room because I've never been in there. But can I move through walls if I project into a room I know and walk through the wall into a room I don't know?

A: Certainly. The restriction applies only to where your psychic avatar can *initially manifest*. Once you manifest there, you can move about and discover new places.

Q: If a scoundrel uses a Force Point on a d20 roll and only rolls a two and therefore decides to use his lucky ability, will he get to apply the bonus from the spent Force Point on the lucky reroll?

A: Yes. The effects of spending a Force Point last until the character's action in the next round.

Q: In a recent session in my campaign, a Jedi character was flanked by two stormtroopers. Since the Jedi had two attacks, he thought he should be able to attack both of them. However, I thought that the stormtrooper behind him should at least get an attack of opportunity, because the Jedi didn't have Whirlwind Attack. What really should have happened?

A: The Jedi character should have been able to attack both opponents, one after the other, and the second stormtrooper wouldn't get an attack of opportunity just because the Jedi didn't attack him first. It doesn't require Whirlwind Attack to split one's attacks between two different opponents in the same round, nor is there any particular penalty to attacking multiple opponents. Had the Jedi moved more than 2 meters out of the second stormtrooper's threatened area, the second stormtrooper would have been able to make an attack of opportunity. But, instead, the stormtroopers conveniently flanked the Jedi, making it possible for him to attack both without moving more than 2 meters -- or even leaving his own square.

Q: Recently, a Jedi character in my game lost his constructed lightsaber and asked his Master for a spare until he could build a new one. By this time, he had a 3d8 damage code, but I ruled that because this "loaner lightsaber" wasn't his own creation, he only dealt 2d8 damage. Was my ruling inaccurate? I always thought of the extra d8s for lightsaber damage as representing the combat skill of a Jedi wielding his own lightsaber. But should the extra d8 be used even if the lightsaber wasn't constructed by the Jedi wielding it?

A: The bonus damage comes from the Jedi's understanding of how to use the lightsaber; it's not because the Jedi is particularly familiar with the weapon itself. The Jedi *does* get a +1 bonus to attacks for using a lightsaber of his own creation, but that's not the same thing.



Q: Do Yuuzhan Vong characters get Force Points and Dark Side Points?

A: According to the *Ultimate Alien Anthology*, Yuuzhan Vong can never gain the Force-Sensitive feat, and they never gain Force Points, though they can gain Dark Side Points. The rules might change in the future (depending on what goes on in the remaining novels in The New Jedi Order series) to allow Yuuzhan Vong characters to gain Force Points and even become Force-users, but for the time being, Yuuzhan Vong do not get Force Points.

Q: I have a player who wants to be a Jedi consular of the Neti species. Both the species and the class have the bonus feat of Force-Sensitive. What would be the most acceptable way to handle this? Give them two extra feats for having it or ignore one of them?

A: You would ignore one of them. If a class ability grants a feat that a character already has, he simply gets no benefit from the class ability -- and he certainly doesn't get to select something else to take its place.

Q: Can a droids with shields angle them? Say they move into a corridor and a band of troopers charge them straight on. Could they feasibly put their shields on double-front for increased DR? And can a character with "Force Shield" do the same?

A: No and no. The ability to angle shields is not an aspect of the shields, but of the control systems built into starships.

Q: I recently tried to create a Gamemaster character for my campaign using the Martial Arts Master prestige class from the *Hero's Guide*, but I ran into a little difficulty. The requirements for the prestige class are so demanding that I couldn't give the character a level in the prestige class before 13th level. The problem lies in the feats required as prerequisites for the prestige class: Advanced Martial Arts, Martial Arts, Improved Martial Arts, and at least two martial arts expertise feats. The two martial arts expertise feats also mean that the character must have the prerequisite martial arts style feats. That is a total of seven feats! Any chance of seeing an official errata on this?

A: When we designed the martial arts mastery feats for the Hero's Guide, we intended to note that both soldiers and Force warriors get the martial arts feats from the Hero's Guide on their bonus feat lists.

Q: My group also plays **Dungeons & Dragons** and with the arrival of **D&D 3.5**, many of the rules have changed. Since *Star Wars* and **D&D** are both d20 system games, is Wizards of the Coast planning to incorporate any of the changes to the rules in the other d20 games? Mainly, we're concerned with the combination of skills into broader categories and feats such as ambidexterity, which was cut from **D&D** but is still in *Star Wars*.

A: It is possible that Wizards will one day update the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* to reflect the recent changes to **Dungeons & Dragons**. But until that day comes, you can continue using the existing *Star Wars* rules. If in the meantime, though, you wish to adapt the **D&D 3.5** rules to *Star Wars*, you'll have to put together your own conversion system.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 27: "We Loot the Bodies!"

[*JD Wiker*](#)

Can you loot a stormtrooper's body? Sure. *Should* you? Maybe not. In this installment of "Jedi Counseling," [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker gives tips on stopping heroes from robbing corpses. He also looks at increasing levels for allies and villains, playing beyond 20th level, and the proper use of various skills and feats.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: In my campaign, after the heroes kill an enemy, they loot the body. Normally, this would be perfectly fine, but it's reached the point where they're fighting over who gets what and so on. Now it seems like the players are more interested in looting Gamemaster characters than in completing the mission. At first I tried giving Dark Side Points. Then I started saying some of the equipment was destroyed. Do you have any suggestions?

A: Usually, players develop bad habits like this because there's some element of the campaign that rewards it. The most common example is killing helpless prisoners. Let's say the heroes defeat an opponent without killing him, and turn him over to the authorities. Then the GM brings the character back again -- which tells the players that if they don't want to fight the same villain again, they have to kill all their helpless foes.

Something like this might be motivating your players to loot. Are you letting them sell the looted gear for full price? Cut prices drastically. Conversely, are they always short on credits? Give them enough credits to buy whatever they want.

Do they sometimes need lots of equipment (weapons and such) to defeat your opponents? Give them foes they don't need the best weapons to defeat.

Are they transferring a similar mentality from a different game -- looting in *Star Wars* because it's standard operating procedure in **Dungeons & Dragons**, for example? Dock them experience points.

I'm also guessing that they might have started fighting over the loot about the time that you started declaring that equipment was destroyed: It told them that free equipment was limited, so they had better call "bagsies" on it. It doesn't sound like they're too terribly upset about getting Dark Side Points for fighting among themselves, so, again, experience point penalties might be a better choice. A player can live with DSPs, but stretching out that long haul from level to level is less palatable.

That probably won't stop them from finding creative ways to snatch up all the useful gear, though, so you might need to exercise a few tricks to break them of the habit. For example, put them in situations where hanging around to loot is a bad idea because more stormtroopers (or battle droids, or whatever) are always going to arrive before the heroes finish their looting. Or give them a time limit: The ship's reactor core is going to explode in so many rounds, and if they spend that time looting, they won't make it to the escape pods.



In the long run, you'll probably find it easier to come up with ways to punish them for looting, but they'll also find ways to get around the punishments (or they just won't care). So the trick is really to figure out what it is about your campaign that makes them believe looting is a good idea, and remove it.

Q: When using the Kinetic Combat feat, is the weapon used considered unattended for saves against Drain Energy and attacking the item?



A: No, the item is considered "held," despite the fact that it's not in your actual hands. The same goes for objects you pick up using Move Object.

Q: When using Kinetic Combat, does the square the weapon is in threaten the area, and can you make attacks of opportunity?

A: No and no. Kinetic Combat is really just a way of attacking at a distance with a melee weapon.

Q: In the *Star Wars* movies and books, Yoda and other Jedi refer to the Force as an energy field that surrounds, penetrates, and binds the galaxy together. Force Grip uses this field to compress lines of energy around vital organs, allowing the character to choke a hero or a villain. So could Dissipate Energy be used to convert that energy into vitality if the target character failed his saving throw and therefore took the damage as wound points instead of vitality?

A: Well, no, but I can see how you might come to that conclusion. The meaning of "energy" in the Dissipate Energy feat is very specific: It refers to damage of the "energy" type, as opposed to damage of the "physical" type. Force Grip specifically states that the damage caused is physical damage, so Dissipate Energy won't help against it.

Q: When it comes to recurring Gamemaster characters that last more or less throughout an entire campaign (some friends, some foes), how quickly would you suggest they advance in level in comparison to the player characters? Should they advance one level for every level the players gain, so that they continue to be a threat (or a useful ally)? Should I allow the heroes to "catch up" in levels so that they can finally defeat that pesky villain? The former seems more or less realistic, while the latter seems more fun and dramatic. What do you think?

A: Really, it depends on what you want out of your villains. You can make a villain "recurring" by making him tough, smart, or just plain better than his opponents. (With particularly good or lucky players, it sometimes takes all three.) Just so long as he lasts until you're ready to let them defeat him, without you arbitrarily "saving" the villain from time to time. So the trick is to decide whether he starts out more or less invincible (and the heroes eventually reach his level and kick him to the curb) or whether he's a challenge commensurate with their abilities, and he just keeps getting better -- until you're ready to let them kick him to the curb. If you choose the latter option, you just have to come up with some activity that the villain's been up to between encounters with the heroes, something that gives him the experience to stay one step ahead of them.

With allies, it's a bit different. You *can* go the "fixed-level" route with an ally (in which case, the heroes eventually

outstrip his abilities, which is perfectly fine), or you can have the ally just keep creeping up in levels (perhaps by awarding him the same general experience you award the heroes).

In either case, remember that this is *Star Wars*, and what you're aiming at is a level of cinematic excitement, rather than realistic bookkeeping. You needn't worry too much about using a consistent system for both villains and allies, so long as the heroes eventually get to outshine both.

Q: If a character has the scout ability Uncanny Dodge (retains his Dexterity bonus to Defense, regardless of being caught flat-footed or struck by a hidden attacker) and then takes the elite trooper prestige class -- which also grants Uncanny Dodge -- does the ability stack, like it does in **Dungeons & Dragons**? Does it become Uncanny Dodge (can't be flanked), or is this just the same bonus?

A: Just as in *Dungeons & Dragons*, the two abilities stack, granting what is effectively "improved" uncanny dodge.

Q: Does the Quick Draw feat apply to multiple weapons? And if so, does the size of the weapon matter?



A: Quick Draw doesn't specify that you can only draw one weapon per round. Since it's a free action with Quick Draw, and you can perform as many free actions in a round as the GM deems reasonable, then yes, it's reasonable to assume that you could draw two weapons in the same round using Quick Draw.

As GM, though, I personally would stipulate that you can, at best, "fill your hands" with weapons using this tactic. So, a two-handed, Medium-sized character could draw two Medium or smaller weapons, or one Large weapon, using Quick Draw.

Q: I asked you a question in "[Jedi Counseling](#)" #20 about the skill Sever Force, from the [Power of the Jedi Sourcebook](#), and you explained that Dark Side Points can't be spent like Force Points can. Thanks, but I think you might have misunderstood. My point was that the character in question had managed to reduce his Dark Side Points to less than half his Wisdom score. Now that he's no longer tainted, does that mean that he's no longer under the effects of Sever Force?

A: Sorry I misunderstood. Yes, you've got it right. Once the character drops his Dark Side Points to less than half his Wisdom score, he is no longer required to make Will saves to use the Force; he can use the Force normally again.

Q: Can you use the Redirect Attack feat from [Hero's Guide](#) to redirect an attack back at the original attacker, since he is adjacent to you and within reach of the attacker (himself)?

A: No. The wording of the feat should probably point out that the original attacker is not a valid target.

Q: Can a character recover vitality points while his wound points are not at maximum?

A: Yes.

Q: What is the ruling for characters who reach 20th level? Is there play beyond 20th level, or is it the end of the campaign?

A: The campaign ends only when the group wants it to end. Although there are no official rules for taking characters beyond 20th level, it's not all that difficult to extrapolate from Table 3-1: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits. However, there aren't any rules for class abilities beyond 20th level (nor are there likely to be any), so if you want to keep gaining class abilities, 21st level would be a good time to think about multiclassing.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 28: Zabrak Head-Butts

[JD Wiker](#)

Maybe Darth Maul should have ditched that double lightsaber and just sharpened the spikes on his head instead. [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) designer JD Wiker tackles Zabrak head-butts and other pointed issues in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling." Also: Clearing up confusion regarding initiative, move actions, and a Jedi's Deflect ability.



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: According to the [Arms & Equipment Guide](#), an exotic weapon can potentially receive one personalization. And in the revised core rulebook, it states that a Jedi who constructs his own lightsaber gets a +1 attack bonus with it. Does this bonus count as a personalization?

A: No, but a Jedi could, by following the rules in the *Arms & Equipment Guide*, construct a personalized lightsaber.

Q: If a Zabrak head-butts someone, would his head spikes deal extra damage? And, if so, how much?

A: Well, a head-butt is basically just another kind of unarmed attack, so, assuming you can pull one off, it should deal the same damage. If your GM allows, the head spikes might add another point of damage, but if you're going to go that far, you might want to allow head-butts only to opponents in the same square.



Q: My character started out as a Force adept. When I met the requirements, I multiclassed to the Force warrior prestige class and now I've reached 7th level. Am I now considered a Jedi Knight? The [Power of the Jedi Sourcebook](#) says "When the Force warrior's total Jedi levels (Force warrior levels plus any other Jedi class levels) equal 7, the character becomes a full Jedi Knight and gains a bonus knight feat." Do I need at least one level in a Jedi class in order to be a true Jedi, and do I gain the bonus feat?

A: Yes, you need at least one level in a Jedi class before you're considered a Jedi Knight.

Q: If I'm not a Jedi, do I at least get to choose a non-Jedi bonus feat (for example, Burst of Speed), or do I just not gain anything from that Force warrior ability?

A: If you don't have at least one Jedi level, you just don't gain anything from that Force warrior ability.

Q: If a Force adept imbues a weapon through the Force weapon ability (in essence, "blessing" the weapon), then hands it off to another individual (such as his tribe's chief warrior) to use in combat, will the new wielder retain all the benefits of the Force-charged weapon?

A: No. The text for Force weapon states: "This must be a weapon that the Force adept wields personally."

Q: I've noticed that melee weapons in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* are categorized into different types, such as "slashing" or "bludgeoning." Obviously, this refers to the type of damage each weapon inflicts, but how does it pertain to a game of *Star Wars*? Is "slashing" a different type of damage than "bludgeoning"? Do the different types have different effects on the characters?

A: The damage is different, but it has more to do with the effects of damage resistance or damage reduction on the damage itself than the effect of the damage on the character. However, because melee combat is fairly rare in *Star Wars* -- lightsabers notwithstanding -- it rarely comes up.

Q: Then what's the difference between physical damage and energy damage? My friend says that physical damage means that the damage goes directly to wounds.

A: Well, no, that's not what "physical" damage means. The two types you mentioned before -- slashing and bludgeoning -- along with a third (piercing) are examples of physical damage. Blasters and lightsabers, on the other hand, deal energy damage. **Dungeons & Dragons** further differentiates types of energy damage, but *Star Wars* does not.

Q: The noble and crime lord both get the Resource Access class ability. If a character takes both of those classes, does he add both of his class levels and use the highest multiplier (50 for crime lord instead of the noble's 20), or does he make two different checks? If the latter, does he decide whether to make a check for crime lord or noble?

A: He gets to make two different checks (if he desires), choosing whichever (noble or crime lord) he'd like to try first.

Q: Can you use Deflect (defense) if you lose initiative to your opponent? Deflect (defense) provides a dodge bonus to your Defense, but as we all know, you don't get any dodge bonuses if you are flat-footed, and you are considered flat-footed if you lose initiative (unless you have uncanny dodge.) Perhaps a better way to ask: Can you use any form of Deflect if you lose initiative?

A: As you point out, Deflect (defense) supplies a dodge bonus, and you don't get a dodge bonus if you are denied your Dexterity bonus to Defense. So, even if you have an ignited lightsaber in your hand, if you lose initiative to an opponent armed with a blaster pistol, you don't get to add the dodge bonus from Deflect (defense) to your Defense.

The same is not true of Deflect (attack), however. Using that ability is a reaction and doesn't rely on retaining the Dexterity bonus to Defense.

Q: In that case, let me ask another question. Say the Jedi acts first in a combat, but his noble buddy doesn't act until after the bad guy, who uses his action to fire a blaster at the noble. The noble is standing next to the Jedi. Can the Jedi use Deflect (extend defense and attack) to give the noble a dodge bonus, even though the noble is still flat-footed and thus can't get dodge bonuses?

A: An interesting question! By a strict reading of the rules, no, the noble wouldn't get the benefit of the Jedi's protection, because the noble can't benefit from dodge bonuses. However, I'd rule that, in this case, the dodge bonus is coming from someone who's not flat-footed, so the noble can get the benefit.

By a similar token, if the Jedi were flat-footed, he wouldn't be able to use his Deflect (extend defense and attack) to grant the noble a dodge bonus, but he could use the "attack" part to bounce the blaster shot back at the opponent.

Q: When exactly does a Jedi lose his move action when deflecting blasters? For example, let's say it's the second round of combat, the Jedi has lost initiative, and his opponent fires on him. The Jedi immediately declares that he will use Deflect (defense) against the incoming blaster fire. The Jedi survives, and his turn comes up in the current round. Does the Jedi immediately lose his move action for this turn, or does he lose his move action during the next turn?

The rules state that a Jedi who uses Deflect (defense) during a round loses a move action in the next round. But that would mean that when a Jedi loses initiative, is fired upon, and uses Deflect (defense), he would have all of his actions when his turn comes up in the current round. Shouldn't he lose his move action in the round that he uses



Deflect (defense), if his turn hasn't come up in the round?

A: The confusion over "a round" and "a *character's* round" is a common mistake. The rules on Deflect actually say "in *his* next round," meaning "when the Jedi's turn comes up in the initiative order." So even if the Jedi acts immediately after his blaster-wielding opponent, *that's* the start of *his* "next round," rather than six seconds later.

To spell that out a bit clearer, let's say the blaster-wielder's initiative was 16, and the Jedi's initiative was 15. On initiative count 16, the blaster-wielder shoots at the Jedi, who opts to use Deflect (defense). When the opponent has concluded his actions and the initiative count proceeds to 15, the Jedi's "next turn" begins, and he loses a move action.

Q: If a Jedi wants to use Deflect (defense) or Deflect (attack) with the total defense action, when exactly does the Jedi lose a move action? The rules state that using deflect with total defense is not a reaction but instead counts as an attack action. What does this mean?

A: Well, the wording is a bit vague, and also misleading. Yes, it's an attack action, in the current round, to use total defense. However, declaring Deflect (defense) or Deflect (attack) still costs a move action from the character's next round. So, using the initiative numbers from the example above, the Jedi would declare, on initiative 15, that he's using an attack action to set up total defense, gaining a +4 dodge bonus until his initiative comes up again in the following round. Now, at any point between initiative 15 on the current round and initiative 15 in the next round, the Jedi can declare Deflect (defense) or Deflect (attack), and doing so costs him a move action in his next round. So, in short, getting all the dodge bonuses from total defense and Deflect (defense) costs a Jedi an attack action now and a move action later.

Q: If a Jedi gets attacked by someone who beat him on initiative, can the Jedi even use deflect blasters with total defense?

A: No. That's what it means when it says that using Deflect in this fashion isn't a reaction.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the fledgling *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, and the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#), a d20 design studio.

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Jedi Counseling 29: 'Sabers for Sale

[*JD Wiker*](#)

Can a Jedi sell a fallen foe's lightsaber -- or keep it for himself? Is Watto the only Toydarian who can fly that well? Can you ever block a lightsaber with your bare hands? Let designer JD Wiker soothe your [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) rule worries in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."

Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!



Q: Do Jedi hold some kind of reverence toward all lightsabers, not just their own? Or are lightsabers just a tool to be used or sold when recovered from the bodies of defeated dark Jedi?



A: In other words, would a Jedi see an unclaimed lightsaber as "loot?" No, not by any means. Jedi look at lightsabers the same way that samurai look at their katanas; they are both lethal weapons and symbols of honor. A Jedi might use the lightsaber of a fallen opponent (if he had lost his own), but he probably wouldn't keep it if he didn't need it, and he certainly wouldn't sell it. In the Old Republic and Rise of the Empire eras, the Jedi would most likely turn it over to the Jedi High Council for disposal. In other eras, a Jedi who finds himself with one lightsaber too many is liable to store his "extras" someplace safe until he finds he needs them.

Q: When Force adepts use their Force Talisman ability, how many items can they create? Could an adept spend five days and 5 Force Points on five different personal items so that he or she receives a +10 bonus? Or is a Force Adept limited to one talisman at a time? The new revised rulebook says nothing on how many they can create.

A: The Force adept isn't particularly limited to one talisman at a time, but the effects of multiple talismans do not combine. A Force talisman provides a Force bonus, and Force bonuses do not stack with other Force bonuses.

Q: Can they create talismans and give them to a friend who is also a non-Jedi Force user?

A: They can, but the Force talisman won't have any effect on the recipient, since the bonus it grants applies only to the Force adept who created it.

Q: If scout has uncanny dodge (the ability to retain his Dexterity bonus to Defense), does he still lose his Dexterity bonus if someone is using the "feinting in combat" aspect of Bluff on him?

A: Yes. The scout's uncanny dodge ability doesn't allow him to ignore any instance when he would lose his Dexterity bonus to Defense -- just when he's flat-footed or struck by a hidden attacker.

Q: I have a question about the Craft skill. I understand that there are separate skills for making different types of weapons, but are there multiple skills for making armor? Are there separate skills for Craft (light armor) and Craft (Powered Armor), for example, or is it just one overall Craft (armor) skill?

A: It's just one Craft (armor) skill. The design team who worked on the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* felt that subdividing skill categories even further -- when there are only so many skill points to go around -- would be an unfair penalty to players who don't want to have to use up all their skill points just to be able to make different types of armor (or blasters, or landspeeders, or what-have-you).

Q: The falling damage rules on page 289 of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook refer to 1d6 points of damage per 4 meters fallen. Does that mean you take 1d6 points of damage for each full 4-meter increment fallen, or do you take that damage even if you fall any portion of the 4 meters?

A: Generally, it's the full 4 meters, though the GM may rule, in certain circumstances, that a portion of 4 meters counts as the full distance.

Q: In the *Ultimate Alien Anthology*, the Toydarian species is listed as having a flight speed 18 with "poor" maneuverability. However, in Episode I and Episode II, Watto is clearly able to hover and fly backwards. This would require a maneuverability of at least "good." Should the Toydarian race have Good Maneuverability, since they are basically balloons with wings, or should I simply tell my players that Watto is an exception, not the rule, and that he has the "Improved Flight" feat?



A: Well spotted! I talked with the developer of the *Ultimate Alien Anthology*, and we agreed that Watto is *not* an exception; all Toydarians should have "good" maneuverability.

Q: In the *Hero's Guide*, the shipjacker archetype has a variant ability to hotwire starships, which is listed as "Hot Wire (2nd level)." The text goes on to say that it replaces the scout's Trailblazing feature, but Table 2-9 shows that the shipjacker doesn't get Trailblazing until 5th level. Does this mean that, at 2nd level, a shipjacker gets Hot Wire (in addition to the scout's starting feats and bonus feat), and at 5th level, gets nothing?

A: No. That "2nd level" reference is an error. It may have been taken from the original text, which referred to the scout's 2nd-level ability of Trailblazing. The shipjacker can't get this variant ability until 5th level, when he's taken his second level of scout.

Q: Can you be hit with a coup de grace while stunned?

A: No. The rules on delivering a coup de grace specify that the opponent must be helpless. Stunned opponents are not considered helpless.

Q: When you take wound point damage and become fatigued (taking a -2 penalty to Dexterity), do you lose the ability to use a feat that requires a higher Dexterity? I have the same question about ability points lost to poison or radiation.

A: Yes, you would temporarily lose the ability to use that feat. So, for example, if you had a 16 Strength, a 14 Dexterity, and the Power Attack and Dodge feats (which require a 13 or better Strength or Dexterity, respectively), and you became fatigued, you'd lose the ability to use Dodge (because your Dexterity would no longer meet the minimum), but you'd retain the ability to use Power Attack (because your Strength would remain high enough).

Q: A situation came up in my game last night: The player character was grappling with a bad guy, and the bad guy wanted to escape the grapple. So we rolled opposing grapple checks, as per the rules. I rolled a natural 20, which is always a success. But the player *also* rolled a natural 20 to keep me from breaking the grapple. Who wins in a situation like that?

A: A grapple check is like an attack roll, but it's not *actually* an attack roll, and thus doesn't fall under the "natural 1/natural 20" rules. So, in this case, neither character can automatically succeed, and it's down to the usual mechanic of a grapple check: Whoever gets the higher total wins.

Q: In the *Hero's Guide*, the Teräs Käsı Expertise feat states, "You are able to block melee weapons with your bare hands." Does this include lightsabers?



A: Yes. Lightsabers are melee weapons, and the actual mechanics of the feat don't specify "non-energy melee weapons."

Q: Say you're holding an activated lightsaber in one hand and a blaster in the other. You're out of melee range, so you're not using your lightsaber, just the blaster. Do you still incur the two-handed penalties?

A: No. The penalties apply if you're actually *attacking* with the weapon, not just holding it.

Q: Also, what if you have Lightsaber Defense or any of the other feats that give you a bonus to Defense when wielding a lightsaber? Do those still apply?

A: That's correct: You'd get the bonus to Defense, but again, since you're not attacking with the lightsaber, you wouldn't take the usual "fighting with two weapons" penalties.

Q: And what about deflecting blaster shots with the lightsaber? I can see where you couldn't redirect them to attack, but what about just blocking?

A: Certainly you could do that. Again, it's not attacking -- unless you use the Deflect (attack) option, in which case, the usual two-weapon fighting penalties would apply.

Q: In my game the other night, two thugs were fighting shoulder to shoulder when a Jedi moved up to attack with his lightsaber. The thugs knew that if they fired their blasters, they would provoke an attack of opportunity. But would they suffer from the firing into melee penalty?

A: Yes, they would, even though neither of them is using a melee weapon. Note, though, that if their "blasters" were blaster *pistols*, they wouldn't provoke attacks of opportunity. Only ranged weapons that require two hands

to operate provoke an attack of opportunity.

Q: Can a Force user try to use the skill Heal Another (for wound or vitality damage) until successful, or can he make only one attempt per hour (or 24 hours, depending on whether the attempt is for vitality or wounds) regardless of success on the first attempt?

A: The text of Heal Another is actually pretty specific: "You can't attempt to heal." So, if you try to use Heal Another and fail, you can't try again until the appropriate length of time has passed: an hour (for vitality damage) or 24 hours (for wound damage or ability damage).

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*.

Jedi Counseling 30: Cross Breeding

[JD Wiker](#)

Could a Human and a Twi'lek mate to produce a half-Human, half-Twi'lek child? How should high-gravity and low-gravity worlds affect the heroes? What's the correct way to apply size modifiers in combat? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: I'm a bit confused about mastercraft items. The revised core rulebook says that mastercrafting an item can add a +1 to +3 bonus to the damage or other characteristic of a weapon. So, could I add a +1 to the threat range of a blaster? And could I also add +1 to the attack roll of the same blaster? Could I have a blaster with +3 attack, +3 damage, and a threat range of 17-20? How do I determine the cost for that?

A: The revised core rulebook might be a bit too vague on this topic, but what it actually states regarding mastercrafting (on page 136) is "The bonus is applied to the damage dealt by a weapon, the damage reduction of a set of armor, or some other characteristic as given in the item's description."

What that means is that mastercrafting can affect the damage of a weapon, the damage reduction of armor, or the bonus provided by another item (such as the equipment bonus to Listen, Spot, and Search checks provided by sensor packs) -- but that's it. "Some other characteristic" specifically applies to nonweapon, nonarmor items; the range of options for weapons and armor are what it states: damage and damage reduction.

So, given that information, the answer to your question is that you cannot use mastercrafting to increase the threat range or attack bonus of a weapon. And that should answer your follow-up question about determining the cost.

Q: Can you cross breed between different species? Say, could a Human and a Twi'lek produce offspring? If so, which species can mix?

A: Technically, it's not possible for species to cross breed. That's actually part of the definition of "species": that they are not capable of breeding with other species. In fact, that's part of a subplot (a love affair between Gavin Darklighter and a Bothan pilot) in the *X-Wing* novels by Michael Stackpole and Aaron Allston.

That said, there has been at least one cross-breed in *Star Wars*: Rystáll, the red-haired dancer in Jabba's Palace in *Return of the Jedi*. She's described as the half-breed product of a union between a Human father and an alien mother. So it's possible for *some* species to interbreed, but it seems unlikely that there are half-Human/half-Twi'lek characters, or we'd have seen some evidence of them in the *Star Wars* universe by now. Unlikely, but not impossible -- it is, after all, your campaign.



Q: Some of the characters in my game are about to find themselves on a high-gravity world (twice normal). What penalties would the high gravity impose on them, especially in combat?

A: You could take a cue from the *Manual of the Planes* for **Dungeons & Dragons**, which suggests a -2 penalty to Balance, Climb, Jump, Ride, Swim, and Tumble checks, as well as attack rolls. The book goes on to point out that the weight of equipment should be increased correspondingly (doubled, in this case), and the ranges of physical ranged weapons (arrows, for example, but not blaster bolts) should be halved. Falling, likewise, would deal greater damage; the *Manual of the Planes* suggests 1d10 points per 10 feet fallen, which would work out to 1d10 per 4 meters fallen in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*.

Q: What about low-gravity worlds, then?

A: The *Manual of the Planes* has a similar answer, though for different reasons (lack of coordination, as opposed to heaviness of one's limbs). A character on a low-gravity world should suffer a -2 penalty on Balance, Ride, Swim, and Tumble checks, as well as attack rolls. Equipment weights should be halved, and ranges of physical weapons should be doubled. Falls should deal 1d4 points of damage per 4 meters. Climb and Jump checks, though, get a +2 circumstance bonus.

Q: In your article on playing Jedi ("[You Are Not a Jedi Yet](#)"), you talk about attacking an object and mention that it does not provoke an attack of opportunity. However, Table 8-2 of the revised core rulebook says that striking an object does provoke an attack of opportunity. If it does not provoke, then why does my character need to waste a feat on Sunder? Did I miss some errata?

A: Whoops! I thought I'd researched that part of the article pretty carefully, but it looks like I goofed there. Good catch! No, the rule didn't change; striking an object held by an opponent provokes an attack of opportunity (though that *does* only apply to opponents also armed with melee weapons, or with the Martial Arts feat -- and I'd like to think that's what I had in mind when I wrote the article). However, the other half of the statement -- that the opponent doesn't get a chance to strike your weapon, if you fail to destroy his -- is still accurate.

Q: For prestige class requirements, it says that one needs a certain number of ranks in certain skills. Are these class skill ranks, or are they total ranks even though cross-class ranks only count as half? I've been saying that they are class skill ranks and counting two cross-class ranks as one. Am I doing it right?

A: Nope -- you've got it just a little bit off. The requirement in terms of ranks doesn't care how you acquired the ranks, only that you have them. So ranks purchased as cross-class are still "full" ranks, and so count as normal.

Q: If it doesn't matter how you get the ranks, then why bother multiclassing?

A: The benefit of multiclassing here is that you can acquire the ranks more quickly. For example, say you're looking at a prestige class that requires 6 ranks in Balance. A soldier can purchase ranks in Balance, but they cost him 2 skill points (of his already limited pool of skill points). And his maximum ranks in Balance, at any given time, are equal to his soldier levels plus 3, divided by 2 -- in other words, half what his maximum ranks in his class skills are. So that soldier can't have the requisite number of skill ranks in Balance until he reaches 9th level (level 9 +3, divided by 2 equals 6 ranks).

But if that soldier multiclassed into scoundrel -- a class that has Balance as a class skill -- his maximum ranks in Balance are equal to his character level (levels in soldier plus levels in scoundrel) plus 3. So, obviously, if it's important to have a certain number of ranks in a skill, it behooves the character to take a class that has that skill as a class skill.

Q: I have a back-to-basics question for you. When determining melee and ranged attack bonuses and figuring in the size modifier, are you adding in the *character's* size modifier, or the difference between his modifier and his opponent's size modifier? I've always added the character's personal size modifier. Why give the opponent another positive or negative modifier when his defense is already being altered by a personal size modifier, and is either harder or easier to hit as it is. Can you clarify?

A: The idea is based on the notion that nearly anyone can hit the broad side of a barn (provided that the barn is bigger than the character). But if the barn is much smaller -- say, a toy barn -- hitting it might be more difficult, because it's really small by comparison to the person attacking it. In other words, a fly can hit an elephant easily, but the elephant can't hit the fly quite so easily. So it only makes sense that the bonus or penalty to the attack roll is based on the *difference* between the size modifiers of the creatures involved.



Conversely, if only the *defender's* size modifier applied, a Diminutive creature would find it very hard to hit another Diminutive creature, while a Gargantuan creature would be an easy target for another Gargantuan creature, even though they're both the same size.

Q: A player in my game is using the Sector Ranger prestige class out of *Star Wars Gamer* magazine. Its skill requirements do not say 6 ranks, but 6+. Is it the same, or is it a total modifier of +6?

A: It's the same. Wizards changed the standard notation of skill ranks, for purposes of prerequisites, to the minimum number of ranks, instead of "this many ranks or more," with the publication of the revised core rulebook.

Q: Let's say you have a character with a 17 Strength, all three Martial Arts feats, Echani and Echani Expertise, and Heroic Surge. Can the character use Heroic Surge at the beginning of the round to start a grapple, then use the remainder of the round to perform a coup de grace (as outlined under Echani Expertise), potentially killing his opponent in one round?

A: Well, yes. And it's a great combination, provided that it works. Remember, if your character fails to kill the target, the target automatically escapes, so it's not entirely risk-free.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*.

Jedi Counseling 31: Blastin' Jedi

[JD Wiker](#)

Do you want your Jedi to wield a mean blaster pistol? What's the Challenge Code for a TIE fighter, anyway? And why did JD say that multiclassing Jedi faced no restrictions when the core rulebook says they do? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: Is there any way to determine the difficulty of a battle in space? I haven't seen ratings (A, B, C, etc.) for enemy ships as there are for thugs and stormtroopers. Let's say that the heroes (average level 6) are flying in a Corellian YT-3100 transport and are suddenly attacked by three TIE fighters. How much experience should I award once the smoke clears?

A: You're looking at the question from the wrong way around -- rather like saying "What's the Challenge Code of an E-Web blaster?" What you need to look at first is the competence of the crew; after all, even the best weapon is useless if its operator can't hit anything with it. So, with that in mind, determine the challenge (simple, challenging, or extreme) presented by the ship's operators, and that's the effective Challenge Code. Now, obviously, some ships *do* have a tremendous amount of weaponry at their disposal, and you should be prepared to adjust the Challenge Code upward if the opponent ship can lay down a significantly greater amount of fire than the heroes' ship can.

Q: I'm starting a new campaign, and one of my players asked me a good question. She said that her Jedi character wouldn't have learned to use any type of blaster weapon and asked if that character could change Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols) to something else like Weapon Group Proficiency (vibro weapons), Weapon Group Proficiency (primitive weapons), or an Exotic Weapon Proficiency. I don't see a real problem with this, but I wanted to see what the designers thought.

A: A fair number of players don't believe that Jedi characters should be proficient with blaster pistols, on the grounds that the Jedi Order teaches the use of lightsabers, not blaster weapons. Though there's a great deal of evidence that the Jedi do familiarize their Padawans with blaster weaponry (mostly in the Dark Horse *Star Wars* comics and the Jedi Apprentice books from Scholastic), the basic Jedi classes in the revised core rulebook are meant to be a comprehensive overview of Jedi -- not just those from the Rise of the Empire era.

Now, that said, the cardinal rule of roleplaying games is: It's your game. If you feel that Jedi in your campaign should have a different feat in place of Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols), that's your prerogative. One good suggestion (found on the Wizards message boards) is to give Jedi guardians their choice of Martial Arts, Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols), Weapon Group Proficiency (primitive weapons), or Armor Proficiency (light); and to give Jedi consulars the choice of Influence, Iron Will, Low Profile, Persuasive, or Trustworthy.

Q: When using Defensive Martial Arts, does the +2 dodge bonus to Defense apply when you are using a lightsaber or other melee weapon?

A: Yes. The feat deliberately leaves out a list of circumstances under which it *doesn't* apply, because it always applies (so long as your Dexterity bonus applies to Defense, as usual). There is a line of reasoning that states that because this dodge bonus is derived from martial arts training, it should only apply against melee attacks. The designers, however, felt that subdividing the feat into two separate feats -- one for "versus melee attacks" and one for "versus ranged attacks" -- unduly penalizes characters, forcing them to take two feats when one would suffice.

Q: I am creating a stealthy character for my next *Star Wars* game. The plan is for my character to use his Hide

skill to sneak up on opponents and engage them in melee combat. But how many rolls would I have to make to be able to get into melee range? Would once every 5 meters away from the target be enough?

A: The answer is hidden, no joke intended, in the mechanics of the Hide skill: "You can move up to one-half your normal speed and hide at no penalty. At more than one-half and up to your full speed, you take a -5 penalty." So the answer depends on how fast you want to approach your intended target. For most characters (those with a movement speed of 10 meters) this means that you can move 5 meters every round while making a Hide check, at no penalty, or from 6 to 10 meters in the round by taking a -5 penalty.

Q: Does the Senate Guard Ceremonial Blaster Rifle shown in the Expanded Universe section of the website have multifire or autofire settings?

A: Multifire. It's really just a different model of blaster rifle, after all.

Q: Is there any way to specify nonlethal force in unarmed combat?

A: There's really no such thing as "nonlethal" damage in *Star Wars*, but unarmed attacks are normally incapable of inflicting critical hits. So it's reasonable to say that if you have the Martial Arts feat -- and are therefore capable of inflicting critical hits with unarmed attacks -- you can choose to inflict normal damage, with no chance of a critical hit.

Q: The Kinetic Combat feat from [Hero's Guide](#) does not seem to have a vitality cost. Was this an oversight?

A: Yes and no. It *does* have a vitality point cost; the cost just isn't obvious. Using Kinetic Combat costs the same as using Move Object. In most cases involving lightsabers, this means 1 vitality point per round.

Q: Can someone with a blaster make an attack of opportunity?

A: Only if you're swinging it around like a club. Attacks of opportunity apply only to areas that you threaten, and you can threaten areas only with melee weapons.

Q: The revised core rulebook implies that ability checks are essentially untrained skill checks. Does this mean that modifiers for all skill checks also apply to ability checks? For example, if the Fear skill is in effect, does the penalty apply to ability checks as well as to skill checks?

A: Not exactly. Untrained skill checks aren't the same thing as ability checks. They just happen to use the same basic mechanic: d20 + the ability modifier. The major difference, though, is that an untrained skill check gains any benefits from feats, such as Alertness, or Gearhead, and so on. An ability check doesn't benefit from those bonuses. So, Fear affects skill checks and attack rolls, as normal, but not ability checks.

Q: In the [Galactic Campaign Guide](#), Table 1-1: Hit Locations appears to be missing columns. The text on page 39 states that it gives the Defense bonus for a called shot and additional effects if the location is hit. However, the table itself has only "d10" (for random determination, I believe) and "Hit Locations" columns. Could you please provide the full table?

A: Actually, it's not that Table 1-1 is missing information; the text mistakenly refers to Table 1-1 when it should refer to Table 1-2 -- which does, in fact, list all of the Defense bonuses applicable for aiming at a specific body part.

Q: If a character with 40 vitality points and 13 wound points takes a critical hit for 10 points of damage, does that drop him to 40 vitality and 3 wounds? Or does he lose all vitality points too?

A: Suffering a critical hit does not mean that a character loses all his remaining vitality points. Critical hits bypass remaining vitality points and go directly to wounds, but the character keeps his remaining vitality points.

Q: Would that character remain fatigued until he recovered all wound points (which often takes many days), or just until he rested for 8 hours?

A: The rules for becoming fatigued by losing wound points specify that the character suffers the effects of fatigue "until his wounds are healed." So he'll remain fatigued until his wound points are at full again.

Q: In a previous "Jedi Counseling" column, you stated that there are no restrictions for a Jedi who wishes to multiclass, other than that he can't go into another Jedi class. But on page 15 of the revised core rulebook, a sidebar states that "A Jedi character who adds a non-Jedi class can never advance in a Jedi class thereafter." So, which ruling is correct?

A: It depends on whether you're playing in an **RPGA Living Force** campaign or not. The rules on page 15 of the revised core rulebook are specifically for the **Living Force** campaign, so they're essentially "house rules" for a very big house. The ruling I provided, on the other hand, is the overall rule for the game in general. So, if you're not playing in *Living Force*, then you can freely multiclass between a Jedi class and any other non-Jedi class.

You should *always* check with your GM (or with the administrators of the **Living Force** campaign) to make sure that rulings you read here will be applied to the campaign you're playing in. What I offer here is official, but your GM has the last word on whether or not to use my rulings in his or her campaign.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*.

Jedi Counseling 32: Jedi Vs. Door

[JD Wiker](#)

How did Qui-Gon's lightsaber burn through that Neimoidian blast door so quickly in *The Phantom Menace*? Can droid heroes reprogram their feats as easily as it seems? Is Telepathy better than See Force for locating foes? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: In *The Phantom Menace*, Qui-Gon Jinn nearly burned a hole through a blast door, but it didn't take him long to do that even though a blast door has 720 wound points! Did Qui-Gon do something to speed things up?

A: Questions like this are always tricky to answer, because everyone has a slightly different perception of what was going on in the scene. For example, I'd debate whether Qui-Gon was "nearly" through the blast door. He'd carved a little less than halfway through the original door before the Neimoidians closed the actual blast door, and with that door, Qui-Gon had only managed to melt a small quantity of metal.



Still, the question about "speeding things up" makes a valid point about damaging objects in this manner. When you try to use a lightsaber to burn through a door, you're effectively "attacking" the door, though the GM may not ask for attack rolls and go straight to the damage instead (on the grounds that you can't miss such a big target). Thus, if what Qui-Gon was doing was attacking the door, then he would get his normal number of attacks for the round, which would be three. (In the original core rulebook, we stated that Qui-Gon Jinn was a 15th-level Jedi guardian.) So what Qui-Gon did to speed up cutting through the door was to "attack" it three times -- deal damage three times -- each round.

Q: The Telepathy skill has a range of up to 1,000 kilometers. At that range, you can't possibly see a target, and you can't use See Force to detect them. So how do you find a target? The text says you can establish a "mental link with a *specific*" target. So what I'm thinking is this: When you use the power, you must specify a target (Leia, for example), and it doesn't matter whether you know if they're in range or not. (If they're not, the check automatically fails, of course.)

A: That's essentially correct. The range of Telepathy is really more of a radius of effect. To contact someone with it, you send out a message and hope that person is within the range.

Q: But then doesn't Telepathy become more attractive than See Force for tracking people down, provided you know who the target is? Sure, hostile targets get a Will save, but it's still probably easier than See Force (especially against low-level targets) and has a longer range.

A: It is true that Telepathy can "locate" a known, specific individual in the manner you suggest. However, that's not exactly like global positioning; all you learn is that the target is somewhere within the listed distance, but not precisely where within that range. Even if the target is standing 4 meters away from you, Telepathy won't tell you that. See Force, on the other hand, allows you to follow "a glowing line of energy" to its source.

Q: I have a droid character with one level of expert and one level of soldier. It is a self-improving type and can reprogram its skill ranks with a Computer Use check if I roll an 18 or better. But what happens if it fails its Computer Use check? Can I take 20 (and spend 100 minutes/rank time)?

A: As long as your Gamemaster says you have time, yes.

Q: On that same subject: Disable Device is a class skill for expert, but not for soldier. As my droid character

acquired one soldier level, it spent all skill its points on class skills. Then it reprogrammed 1 skill point to Disable Device. With this trick, it acquires this skill as a class skill. This seems too easy; shouldn't it be against the rules?

A: Yes, and it is. In the section on reprogramming droids (in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook), under "Reallocating Skill Ranks," it states "a programmer cannot delete a rank in a cross-class skill to acquire a rank in a class, or vice versa. A programmer must swap ranks in a class skill for ranks in another class skill, or ranks in a cross-class skill for ranks in another cross-class skill." This includes droids that reprogram themselves.

Q: In a previous "Jedi Counseling column," you stated that if a droid is reprogrammed with a new feat, and then it changes to a class that gets the new feat as a starting feat, the droid doesn't get to choose a different starting feat to replace it. But what if my droid starts off as a thug with Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols) as one of its starting feats, and it reprograms that feat to, say, Power Attack. Then the droid advances into the soldier class and gets Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols) all over again? Is that legal?

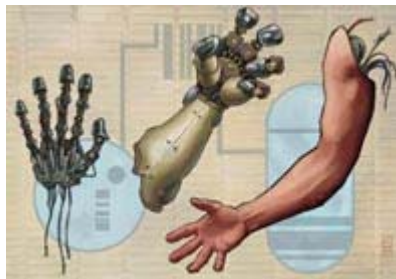
A: First, remember that you can't reprogram the droid's original feats, as the droid rules state under "Reprogramming" (on page 367 of the revised core rulebook). But let's say instead that your droid had picked up Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols) after advancing to 3rd-level thug. Since the droid is going to gain that feat when it advances into the soldier class anyway, the smart move would be to reprogram the blaster pistol proficiency to another feat at some point before advancing to soldier.

Q: My group is having trouble nailing down the exact impact of cybernetics on using the Force.

Is the -2 penalty per cybernetic component applied to Force Points only? Or was the intention that the -2 per component is *per die* on a Force Point, so that someone who has a -2 per die (for one component) would be -6 on a 3d6 Force Point?

Or is the -2 supposed to apply to all Force-related rolls: skill, feats and Force Points?

A: The intent behind the penalty for cybernetics is that it applies only to Force Point rolls -- not skill checks, not saving throws, not attack rolls, and not ability checks (though, of course, each of those will be indirectly affected if you're using the Force Point to augment those rolls). So, whenever you spend a Force Point and you roll your Force dice, you count up your cybernetic components and apply a -2 penalty to the total of the roll *per cybernetic component*.



So, for example, let's say you have a character with four cybernetic components, for a total penalty of -8. Your character is a 7th-level Jedi consular, which means you get 3d6 Force dice when you spend a Force Point. So you roll your dice and get a dead average result -- 11 -- from which you subtract 8, for a final total of 3.

Q: I know you answered a lot about the Miraluka in "Jedi Counseling" 25, but I have something I'd like you to clarify. You said that Miraluka can "otherwise act like someone who can see normally," but what does this actually mean? Can they read computer screens? Can they operate starfighters or vehicles? I have a Miraluka player in my group who wants to be a starfighter pilot. Is this possible?

A: The hardest thing for most people to grasp about the Miraluka is that they aren't really blind. Sure, their eyes don't work, but their Force sight lets them act as though they have normal sight. Actually, it's a little better, since they can "see" in the dark using the Force.

So, to answer your question a bit more directly: Yes, Miraluka can read computer screens and operate starships and vehicles just like someone who uses his or her eyes.

Q: Sorry about beating this topic to death, but I have one more Miraluka-related question. Since their Force sight is always on, can they choose to not use it in order to use Force Stealth? Or must they always be detectable by

anyone using See Force?

A: I think you're referring to the part of Force Stealth that states: "Using another Force skill solidifies your connection to the Force and makes masking your presence impossible." If so, remember that Force sight is a species ability, not a skill. So a Miraluka can use Force Stealth and Force sight at the same time with no problem.

Q: I plan on running a Xexto, and I'm a little confused about how having multiple limbs affects combat. For example, with the Two-Weapon Fighting feat, what's the penalty for having two extra arms?

A: You might want to take a closer look at the Xexto entry in the *Ultimate Alien Anthology*, since it suggests using the new Multiweapon Fighting feat found in the back of that book -- a feat designed specifically to answer this question.



Q: Okay, then what about Rapid Shot? Can my Xexto use Rapid Shot with all his weapons?

A: No. Rapid Shot allows you *one* extra shot with a ranged weapon, not one extra shot with *each* ranged weapon.

Q: What about the multifire and autofire options on blaster weapons? Can I use those settings on all four weapons?

A: The answer is the same as it is for a character with two limbs using multifire or autofire: You'd get a total of one extra attack (for using multifire) or two extra attacks (for using autofire), but not one extra attack or two extra attacks per arm.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*.

Jedi Counseling 33: Double Trouble

[JD Wiker](#)

What feat does it really take to wield a double-bladed lightsaber? Who's really responsible when the victim of Affect Mind murders someone? And just how far can a Tchuukthai chuck a man-sized boulder? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



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Q: Do you need an Exotic Weapon Proficiency (double-bladed lightsaber) to wield a double-bladed lightsaber? In *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, in the weapon description, it states: "While Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) suffices to wield it, to be truly effective one needs Two-Weapon Fighting and Ambidexterity feats." From that statement, it can be concluded that the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) is enough. However, the requirements of the Sith Lord prestige class state that Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) or Exotic Weapon Proficiency (double-bladed lightsaber) is needed. Yet the weapon description didn't mention it, nor do the requirements for any other Sith prestige class. So, do you need EWP (double-bladed lightsaber), or is EWP (lightsaber) good enough?

A: Well, technically speaking, you don't need *either* feat to wield a double-bladed lightsaber. All the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feats do, in this case, is let you ignore the -4 nonproficiency penalty normally associated with using a weapon with which you are unfamiliar.

Now, you can wield a double-bladed lightsaber as a double-bladed lightsaber with no attack penalty if you have the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (double-bladed lightsaber) feat. If you don't have that feat, you can still wield the double-bladed lightsaber, albeit at a -4 penalty-even if you have the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) feat.



Similarly, if you have only the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (double-bladed lightsaber) feat, you can still wield a single-bladed lightsaber-or a double-bladed lightsaber with only one blade ignited-although, again, you'll be taking a -4 penalty to your attacks.

Now, what that section of *The Dark Side Sourcebook* meant was that, because a double-bladed lightsaber is a double weapon, it's most useful if the wielder has the Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting feats, because those feats really complement double weapons.

So, when the Sith Lord prestige class states that you need either the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (double-bladed lightsaber) or Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) feat, it means just that: Either will suffice.

Q: Can you add a Force Defense bonus to your Defense when defending yourself with a lightsaber?

A: You should probably take a closer look at the skill Force Defense. It specifically relates to saving throws and doesn't really have anything to do with Defense in combat.

Q: I have some questions about the Force skill Affect Mind. Let's say a Sith uses Affect Mind to cause a Jedi Knight to murder an innocent person. Does the Jedi get a Dark Side Point? Does the Sith? Or do they both get Dark Side Points?

A: Mind-control effects-which is essentially what the "suggestion" form of Affect Mind is-are always tricky to adjudicate, because they bring into question the issue of free will. If you're not in control of your own actions, are you then responsible for them? Affect Mind effectively removes the question of free will (which is why the Jedi are very careful about how they use it), so the target of a successful Affect Mind suggestion isn't really responsible for what he is *instructed* to do. So if a Sith uses Affect Mind to force a Jedi Knight to murder someone, the Jedi Knight would not gain a Dark Side Point. (The Sith, however, would; he's responsible, after all, for the murder, just as though he'd programmed a droid to commit the crime.)

Q: What if the Sith orders the Jedi to deliver a message-rather than murder someone-and the Jedi kills an innocent person in order to deliver the message? Who'd get the Dark Side Point then?

A: If the Sith used Affect Mind to order the Jedi Knight to deliver a message, and the Jedi Knight, in delivering said message, murdered someone, then *that's* the Jedi Knight's fault. He-not the Sith-would get a Dark Side Point for the murder.

Now, take this a step further: If the Sith ordered the Jedi Knight to murder someone, and the Jedi not only murdered that person but someone else as well, *both* would gain a DSP: the Sith for the intended target, and the Jedi Knight for the "collateral damage."

Q: There are rules in the core rulebook for fighting with two weapons, but are there different rules for fighting with multiple weapons? Let's say I'm playing a Codru-Ji character (a species with four arms), and my hero has weapons in all four hands. Do the penalties follow the same guidelines for four weapons as they would for two weapons?

A: The rules for species with more than two arms usually appear in that species' entry in the *Ultimate Alien Anthology*. This is certainly the case with the Codru-Ji. You'll probably want to pick up a copy of the book if you intend to use multiarmed species in your campaign, because not every species with multiple arms works the same way.

Q: If someone sliced through a thrown thermal detonator with a lightsaber, would it go off? I imagine a normal grenade might, but since a thermal detonator uses a nuclear reaction, it might behave differently.

A: I'd certainly rule that it would detonate, just as I'd rule that slicing through an armed nuclear warhead would cause it to detonate.

Q: Do the damage bonuses from the Force Weapon class ability of the Force adept and dark side devotee stack?

A: Certainly. They were designed to.

Q: Can the Force Weapon class ability be used on a thrown weapon? How would it work on a bow?

A: Take another look at the wording of the Force Weapon ability; it's specifically designed to work only with melee weapons. Certainly some melee weapons can be thrown, but once you throw it, it's no longer considered a melee weapon; it's now a ranged weapon. And if it's designed to be launched from another weapon, it wasn't a melee weapon in the first place.

Q: I am the GM of a game with a Tchuukthai Force adept who has the Improvisational Fighting feat from the

Hero's Guide. Now that he's got the feat, he wants to throw rocks and trees that are the size of a Human, and I don't know what kind of damage or threat they should have. The character has a Strength of 25, so he can heft just about anything that's not bolted down. What should I do?

A: Start by taking a much harder look at the rules for weight and encumbrance. A character with a Strength of 25 can carry 133 kilograms of weight without being encumbered, but that doesn't mean he can throw it very far. In fact, I wrote an article for *Dragon* magazine ("Power Fantasy," *Dragon* #306) specifically about using such tactics. Although it was aimed at *Dungeons & Dragons*, the same principles apply.

When the Tchuukthai wants to throw a rock or a tree at a specific target, he must first make a ranged attack roll against the target, then make a Strength check to see if he can actually move the rock or tree the intended distance. The base distance for throwing an object is 2 meters +1/2 meter for every 2 points by which your Strength check result exceeds 10. Then compare the thrown object's weight with your load rating:

Less than your light load but more than 1/3 your light load: 3x base distance

Less than your medium load but more than your light load: 2x base distance

Less than your maximum load but more than your medium load: 1x base distance

Less than the maximum weight you can lift off the ground but more than your maximum load: no more than 2 meters

So, realistically, a character with a 25 Strength (a +7 bonus) is going to get Strength check results from 8 to 27 (1d20 +7) for base distances of between 2 meters to 6 meters. (27 minus 10 equals 17; 17 divided by 2 equals 8.5, rounded down to 8; 8 half-meters is 4 meters; and 2 base meters plus 4 "earned" meters is 6 meters.)

Comparing that to the chart above, that 25-Strength Tchuukthai could throw a 43- to 133-kg object up to 18 meters; a 266-kg object up to 12 meters; and a 400-kg object up to 6 meters. Anything else, and he'll be lucky to get it out of his own square. Now, assuming that a rock the size of a Human weighs *at least* four times as much as a Human (or about 400 kg), and a tree the size of a Human weighs about twice as much as a Human (or about 200 kg), the Tchuukthai's distances are beginning to look pretty weak. And, in most cases, it's going to take both hands, and a full-round action, to throw something that large.

The real question, though, is damage. In my article, I suggest that the damage should equal 1d6 per 100 kg of the object's weight, plus the thrower's Strength modifier, and you can add falling damage if the target is at an appropriately lower elevation. You might want to up that damage to 2d6 per 100 kg for wooden objects, and 4d6 per 100 kg for stone or metal objects. As for threat ranges-well, unless it's a particularly pointy bit of tree or rock, the standard "20" should do.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](http://www.thegamemechanics.com) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*. (Download them for free at www.thegamemechanics.com.)

Jedi Counseling 34: Shifty Shi'ido

[JD Wiker](#)

What are the practical limits to a Shi'ido's shapeshifting tricks? Are there any restrictions on which species can become Jedi? And why don't multiple doses of a knock-out drug increase the Fortitude save DC? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: I was making a Shi'ido changeling for a game I'm playing, but I ran into several questions about Shi'ido and their shapeshifting abilities. The *Ultimate Alien Anthology* says that Shi'ido can imitate clothing, but can they imitate a person wearing armor?

A: If the armor is one of those types that looks like clothing, sure. Still, a middle-aged Shi'ido can imitate inanimate objects, so I'd allow it for a Shi'ido of that age group or older.

Q: Can a young Shi'ido imitate a droid?

A: Going by the same logic as the previous answer, I'd say only a middle-aged or older Shi'ido could do so.

Q: Does the mass of a Shi'ido change with his shapeshifting?

A: No.

Q: Could a middle-aged Shi'ido imitate an empty suit of armor?

A: Assuming it had the same mass as the Shi'ido, yes.

Q: If the Shapeshift ability allows a Shi'ido to "mimic" other species, does that mean he can imitate only other species that he's encountered, or can he make up a "person" of a particular species? For example, could a Shi'ido just change species characteristics, such as going from blonde to brunette?

A: Certainly a Shi'ido can use his Shapeshift ability to present any features he likes. But whether or not those made-up features actually fool anyone is the reason for attaching a Disguise check to the process. If you just want to pass for a face in the crowd, you're okay, but if you want to fool someone who's actually paying attention, you need to make a Disguise check.

Q: How do the Shi'ido find each other to mate?

A: Presumably through their natural telepathy ability. That, or personal ads. But unless your GM intends to make procreation a theme of your campaign, I can't imagine why you'd ever need to know the answer to that question.



Q: Can the Transformation abilities of the changeling prestige stack?

A: If you mean from the Minor Transformation to Major Transformation abilities, no. You couldn't combine the +1 bonus on damage rolls from Minor Transformation with the +3 bonus on damage rolls from Major Transformation to get a total +4 bonus on damage rolls.

Q: Transformations are described as offensive or defensive advantages, but I don't see why everything is combat-oriented. Couldn't transformations have a similar benefit to a shadowsuit imitating a panther's stealth, or aid in Listen checks like a bat, or grant some rudimentary flight or scent abilities, or grant a bonus for Spot and/or Search checks for having eyes like a hawk, and all that sort of stuff?

A: If your Gamemaster allows it, yes. The changeling prestige class isn't designed as a handy way for you to give your character whatever bonus she needs from round to round, but if your GM intends to let you do so, he should use the bonuses provided by the Transformation abilities as a guideline.

Q: Can Jedi wear armor? In all the movies, Jedi dress in robes, but in the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, Jedi armor is presented in the equipment section. Does wearing armor impose a penalty on Force skills and feats? Or are Force abilities unaffected by what type of armor the Force-user is wearing?

A: Jedi can wear armor, but most find it unnecessary; they just don't get hit so often as to make armor a necessity. But during the Jedi-Sith War (around the Battle of Ruusan), Jedi found themselves on battlefields pretty much on a daily basis, which is why the armor listed in the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook* was created. The Jedi in the Jedi-Sith War wore it to protect themselves against explosions and massed blaster fire—both all-too-common events on battlefields. But as the Jedi Order moved away from being warriors, the need for armor diminished, so most modern Jedi don't bother using it.

Q: Why is armor so useless? It's hardly worth wearing. Most players I know simply build characters to have high Dexterity scores and feats to support fighting without armor.

A: The design team deliberately made armor less attractive to characters because we had observed that the heroes in the *Star Wars* movies didn't wear armor. So, in order to preserve the flavor of *Star Wars*, we made armor less useful than it is in, say **Dungeons & Dragons**. Characters like Darth Vader, Jango Fett, and Boba Fett all have their own reasons for wearing armor, and they've mostly adapted to it. Otherwise, armor is usually reserved for the "grunts": clone troopers and stormtroopers, and a little bit of armor padding worn by Rebel troops.

In practice, armor is most useful to brawler types: the high-Constitution, low-Dexterity characters who rush into melee combat and don't much care about how wearing armor impacts their Dexterity bonus to Defense. So, unless you're playing such a character, armor might very well seem useless. It only comes into play when you're taking wound damage, and you've probably constructed your character so that he doesn't get hit all that often.

Q: One of the players in my game has ranks in Demolitions and wants to build his own explosives. Page 28 of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook discusses building explosives from scratch and says, "If the check fails, the device is ruined and the raw materials are wasted. There is a 25% chance that the explosive detonates during construction, dealing one-half of its intended damage to the builder and anyone else in the blast radius." Does this 25% chance of detonation apply any time you build explosives from scratch, or only if you fail your check?

A: It applies only when you fail your check. It's a little harsh to apply that 1-in-4 chance of an explosion to a character who hasn't made any mistakes.

Q: I'm starting up a new game soon, and I'm running into a problem. I told everyone in the party that they have to be a Force-user of some sort, or at



least in tune with the Force (like an Antarian Ranger). But I have a player who wants to create a Jawa character. Can a Jawa become a Jedi? If so, are penalties attached?

A: So long as a species doesn't have a note in the species text saying that they cannot have the Force-Sensitive feat (or are otherwise prevented from becoming Jedi because of some social restriction), a member of any species can become a Jedi. We don't usually see them in *Star Wars* books or movies because, in the official *Star Wars* universe, certain species have simply gone unnoticed by the Jedi: Jawas, Gungans, Ewoks, and so on. But it's your campaign, so if you want to rule that a Jawa or two has received Jedi training, the rules themselves don't forbid it.

Q: If a target is subjected to multiple doses of a toxin or drug (for example, multiple critical hits with a knock-out dart), should the Fortitude DC for the save also increase for each successive hit? For example, if a target is hit with a toxin dart twice in the same round (or over the course of a few rounds or even a few minutes), should the Fortitude save be higher than the base DC of 15? The poison is still in his system, after all.

A: Though implementing a rule like this is more realistic, it gets into a bit more record-keeping and might slow the game down unnecessarily. The problem is that it raises questions like "How long does a given drug or toxin stay in a person's system?" and "How is the DC affected if a character is hit by a toxin dart and a knock-out dart in the same round?" The slightly abstracted system of a character simply attempting a "make-or-break" Fortitude save whenever he's hit by a drug or poison works just fine for most situations.

Q: When a dark side character spends a Dark Side Point, does his DSP total decrease by 1? Here's why I ask: According to the rules, a character is tainted when he has a number of Dark Side Points equal to half his Wisdom score. But if he spends a DSP, doesn't that decrease his total?

A: It would-if you could spend Dark Side Points. It seems that folks have mentally transferred a remnant of the old West End Games rules to the d20 System version. Or it could be that the d20 rules are unclear on the point. If Wizards revises the core rulebook again at some point, we may need to explain more clearly that no, you cannot spend Dark Side Points-only Force Points.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](http://www.thegamemechanics.com) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*. (Download them for free at www.thegamemechanics.com.)

Jedi Counseling 35: Orange Alert

[JD Wiker](#)

How does an ion cannon affect a starship's shields? Is "knocked out" the same as "unconscious?" And just how useful are those open-neck orange jumpsuits when it comes to keeping a pilot alive in space? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



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Q: The orange combat jumpsuit (listed in Chapter 7: Equipment in the revised core rulebook and shown on X-wing pilots in the movies) does not have any bonuses for Fortitude saves. Are there any bonuses for the base unarmored orange jumpsuit?

A: No -- precisely because it is the *base* unarmored jumpsuit. It's the bare minimum environmental suit for starfighter pilots.

Q: Can you survive in the vacuum of space for any length of time if you're wearing nothing but a helmet and the orange jumpsuit? I wouldn't think so, given that there is an open neck area between the jumpsuit and the helmet.

A: The description of the flight suit in the revised core rulebook points out that it provides life support, protects the wearer from hostile environments, and prevents the wearer from succumbing to the adverse effects of high-velocity flying. In other words, it would keep you alive for a few minutes in a vacuum (despite the seeming design flaw of the open neck). Such suits actually use a small, self-contained magnetic containment field (or "magcon field") to seal the suit against vacuum. But magcon fields don't protect against the cold of space, which is why this flight suit -- as opposed to the armored flight suit -- doesn't provide a bonus on Fortitude saves against cold environments.



Q: Does damage from an ion cannon decrease a starship's shield points?

A: Yes. While the damage itself is functionally different, both regular damage and ion weapon damage have to work their way through a ship's shields in order to have an effect on the ship. But keeping separate track of two different kinds of damage adds an unnecessary level of complexity to starship combat, so ion damage applies to shields just as damage from other weapons does.

Q: Does a "knocked out" character lose his Dexterity bonus to Defense?

A: There's a great deal of confusion over the effect of being "knocked out." Most people mentally equate knocked out with "knocked unconscious" -- and in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*, being knocked out and being unconscious are two different things. The difference is best summed up by the Character Condition Summary sidebar on page 288 of the revised core rulebook:

Knocked Out: A character who takes wound damage in a round and fails a Fortitude save falls to the ground and can take no actions.

Unconscious: The hero is unable to defend himself. He is helpless.

And "helpless" is defined as follows:

Helpless: Paralyzed, sleeping, or unconscious characters are helpless. Any attack against a helpless character is automatically a critical hit.

Q: We're in a New Jedi Order campaign, and Sienar Fleet Systems has given my character two million credits to design the ultimate starfighter, using the rules from *Starships of the Galaxy*. After we consulted the diagrams of an X-wing and measured the size of the laser cannons, we determined that you could fit 16 assault laser cannons on a single X-wing frame. The problem is that we have no idea what kind of damage they would do.

We guessed that every time you double the number of weapons, you add one die of damage (extrapolated from the X-wing and Y-wing), but this doesn't make much sense once you double from 4 to 8 and again from 8 to 16. We figured that once you started adding as many cannons as the ship had in the first place, the damage would go up by even more than usual. So, what is the rule for starship weapon damage for vessels not already covered in the books?

A: The rule is actually in the revised core rulebook (under "Fire-Linked Weapons" on page 214), and you surmised correctly: doubling the number of existing weapons-1 to 2, 2 to 4, 4 to 8, 8 to 16, and so on-adds one die of damage.

Granted, that only really makes much sense at up to four weapons of the same type. Beyond that, you're spending a lot of credits to get *one* extra die of damage. *The system is meant to work that way.* Sure, it's an artificial limitation, but remember that these weapons would eat up a certain amount of the ship's power when they fire (if *Star Wars* were real). But because the game uses an abstract combat system, we don't require you to keep track of how much energy goes into each weapon, each shield, and each engine. Instead, we simulate the reduced power output of too many fire-linked weapons by requiring that you double the number of weapons in order to increase the damage.

Q: A hero in my campaign believes that if a certain weapon, type of armor, or piece of equipment is not available to him, he can build it. He does have the correct Craft skill for each item he wants to build. But he's trying to make weapons that are out of the ordinary, like a blaster rifle with a missile-launcher attachment. Should I allow this?

A: Well, I'm assuming that you looked over and approved his character sheet before you let him play. If so, you've made a tacit agreement with him that it's okay for him to use the skills he's purchased for his character. And blaster rifle/missile-launcher combinations aren't out of the realm of possibility; plenty of modern armies use assault-rifle/grenade-launcher combinations. However, I'm guessing that your real question is: "The hero is using his Craft skills to create weapons I'm not prepared for him to have. How can I keep it from getting out of hand?"

One solution might be to bump up the DC of the Craft check, since a blaster rifle/missile-launcher is obviously more complex to build than a blaster rifle without a missile-launcher. But if the hero has no trouble hitting his DCs, that might not be the answer you're looking for.

Here's another idea: Cut back on the heroes' downtime by having adventures follow rapidly in succession. This way, if you require the character to spend the appropriate amount of time on building weapons (as per the Craft rules), he'll have less time to do it.

Or, if the real problem is that he's designing and constructing weapons that make him (and the rest of the party) invincible in combat, you might need to adjust your GM characters' tactics to counteract the heroes' superior firepower.

On the other hand, you should always consider talking to the player about the effect his character concept is having on the campaign, and work with him to revise his character so that you, he, and the rest of the group can live with the consequences of the new weapons he introduces to the campaign.

Q: Our group ran into a 15th-level bad guy soldier. His Defense bonus was one point higher than our group's own soldier could hit, so her only choice was to roll and hope for a natural 20.

Here's the argument we had: If she rolls a natural 20, she hits the soldier and also rolls to confirm a critical. Would rolling a natural 20 on a roll to confirm a critical be an automatic success? And what happens if you roll a 1 on the confirmation -- do you fail to hit him at all, or do you just fail to confirm the critical?

A: The rules are pretty clear on how this works. Check out page 154 of the revised core rulebook: A natural 20 is *always* a hit, and when you're trying to confirm a critical hit, all you have to do is hit -- not meet or beat the target's Defense. So, if you roll a natural 20 on an attack or on a confirming roll, it's a hit, no matter how high the target's Defense is.

Similarly, a natural 1 is always a miss, even when you're rolling to confirm a critical. However, the original natural 20 means that you hit, so all a 1 means in this case is that you don't confirm the critical, but the attack still hits and deals damage.

Q: In "Jedi Counseling" 27, you said that uncanny dodge stacks, so you could take scout and elite trooper and very quickly get uncanny dodge 2. But in all other similar cases, you've said that it doesn't work that way. So, if you get an ability twice, do you instead get the next higher ability, or is uncanny dodge the only exception?

A: I think I might not have been clear enough in my answer. Uncanny dodge is an unusual case in that each incidence of it adds to the previous incidence. (*Dungeons & Dragons*, in fact, clarified this with the 3.5 rules for that game.) The Jedi's deflect (defense) and deflect (attack) abilities work much the same way. The same could be said for the scoundrel's precise attack ability, if another class or prestige class granted the same ability. Each has some kind of stacking advantage -- uncanny dodge because it has "higher level" versions, and deflect and precise attack because their numerical values improve with additional incidences of the ability.

But in cases like the noble's resource access ability, for example, all that changes is the multiplier, so getting resource access a second time doesn't change anything (though the formulas are sometimes different between classes that get the ability, like the crime lord.) By the same token, a special ability that grants a specific feat -- a feat that can't be taken multiple times (Force-Sensitive, for example, as opposed to Skill Emphasis) -- wouldn't grant a different feat, even if there were an "improved" version of the feat. The same can be said for any feat that doesn't provide a choice of specific applications; the tech specialist's tech specialty ability can apply multiple times (because you choose different applications each time), but the Jedi consular's healing special ability wouldn't stack with the same ability granted by another class.

About the Author

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Jedi Counseling 36: Rock On!

[JD Wiker](#)

Can your Rebel heroes tour the galaxy disguised as musicians? When do you make the saving throw for an illusion? What's the difference between Sympathy and friendliness? And are these answers really official? Designer JD Wiker tackles these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



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Q: I Gamemaster for a group who want to pose as traveling musicians as a cover for their Rebel activities (and as a way to earn money). I want to encourage such a creative idea, but since none of them are nobles (or Zeltrons), Entertain is a cross-class skill. This means that they aren't very good. Should I give them Entertain to use as a class skill, as long as they're in the band, or is that too unbalancing?

A: I can't imagine circumstances under which I'd call cheaper ranks of Entertain "unbalancing," but I suppose it depends on the nature of the campaign. Still, I don't think it would hurt to let players take advantage of their great idea by letting them purchase ranks in Entertain as though it were a class skill.



On the other hand, the hallmark of a brilliant plan is that the planners actually have the means to pull it off. It's all well and good to say, "We'll disguise ourselves as bodybuilders," but if you're 50-kilogram weaklings, it's not a very good plan. If your players really want to go through with their plan to pose as musicians, you might require that their characters actually take at least one level in a class that has Entertain as a class skill -- or continue to purchase ranks at cross-class prices. Otherwise, they should consider going back to the drawing board with their cover story plan.

Q: How important is it to calculate daily costs for characters? If the heroes in my game pose as traveling musicians, they will perform on luxury liners to earn passage from system to system. Do I need to deduct meal costs from their pay? Is that included in the costs for rooms? Does each player need to pay for a room, or do the costs in the revised core rulebook include all of them?

A: Keeping diligent track of how many credits the characters spend from day to day falls into the category of "accounting," not heroic fantasy roleplaying. But if getting by on meager earnings is one of the themes of your campaign, try the following rule.

When not living in hotels or aboard luxury liners, your heroes can choose their standard of living to determine how much it costs to pay for rent, food, and other mundane expenses: Luxurious (10,000 per month), wealthy (2,000 per month), comfortable (1,000 per month), average (500 per month), or poor (200 per month). The exact conditions for each of these will vary from planet to planet, of course, as determined by the Gamemaster.

As a general rule, though, the cost of meals is included in the cost for hotel rooms and berths on ships. They're just not top-quality meals (unless the accommodations themselves are top quality). If the heroes want to dine better, they'll have to pay extra.

Q: When should you award Sympathy, and when should you make NPCs friendly instead? Say my group of hero-musicians performs a great set of songs on a luxury liner. If they try to get another job on the liner, do they get Sympathy with the yacht's owner, or is he considered friendly? How important does a group or accomplishment need to be to warrant Sympathy?

A: The major difference between Sympathy and the friendliness of NPCs is that Sympathy is a measure of how much one of the galaxy's factions likes you, and friendliness is more of an individual measure -- how much one person likes you. So unless the yacht's owner is a member of one of the galaxy's factions, his appreciation for the heroes -- and their musical talents -- should be measured in terms of NPC attitude (hostile, unfriendly, indifferent, friendly, or helpful), rather than Faction Sympathy.

As for when to award Sympathy (or when to change an NPC's attitude toward the heroes), you should do so only when the heroes do something more or less selfless. Playing well in the band might make the yacht owner appreciate the heroes' musical talent, but it shouldn't convince him to loan them money or let them borrow his yacht.

Q: When players cooperate on a skill check, can someone helping the primary check spend a Force Point to improve the primary check? Is the cooperation bonus more than +2 if they roll a 20 or spend a Force Point?

A: No and no. The Force Points you spend to influence rolls apply only to the d20 rolls that you make. And the rules on cooperating on skill checks are pretty clear: Every helper who successfully makes a DC 10 skill check (using the same skill that the leader is using) grants the leader a +2 circumstance bonus.

Q: A friend and I had a rather heated debate about illusions. Four Imperial Inquisitors were chasing him, and he tried to create the illusion of a large bomb falling within 30 to 50 meters of them, so as to obscure line of sight with dust, smoke and debris. Now, because a sufficiently large bomb would create a shockwave that would knock flat everything within a 100-meter radius, I ruled that it was a form of interaction (reasoning that the Inquisitors would not experience the expected physical result -- the shockwave). First, was I correct in this ruling?

My friend then argued that, even if it was a case of interaction, the Inquisitors wouldn't get a save until their turn, because they had to stop, think, and consider the lack of a shockwave. And since the save is a free action, they couldn't take a free action until their turn. I agree that a free action can only be taken during your turn, but I would have thought a save would be a reaction. If I was right about the shockwave being an interaction, when would the Inquisitors get to make their save?

A: Ordinarily, a save is a reaction, but illusions are an unusual case. The text states that the characters encountering the illusion can't attempt a saving throw until they study it carefully (as your friend suggests) or interact with it in a significant fashion. I'd say that having an illusory bomb blow up in your face counts as "interacting with it in a significant fashion." So the Imperial Inquisitors in question should be allowed to make a save as soon as the illusory bomb blows up and they feel no shockwave.

Q: Sometimes the answers you give in the "Jedi Counseling" column cause as many disagreements as they solve, because if someone in the group disagrees, they say that your responses are not official rules but simply suggestions, optional variants, or subjective interpretations. Please tell us: Should we consider the answers in your column to be official rules?

A: Yes, my answers are considered official. There are times when I'm just making suggestions -- which are usually pretty easy to spot, because I generally say "my suggestion would be" -- but I'm one of the designers of the game, and I'm in contact with the other designers of the game. "Jedi Counseling," contrary to what some people believe, isn't answered by a group of help-desk employees, but by someone who participated on the design decisions for most of the roleplaying game books. (And if I wasn't in on the decisions, I can usually reach

the people who were and find out what they intended.)

That all being said, it is true that once you plunk down your money, the game is yours. So if I rule, for example, that all Jedi must eat only tofu or turn to the dark side, you're free to rule otherwise in your own campaign, as long as you and your players agree to play by the same set of rules. If your group's default, though, is "We'll go by the official rulings," then you're in the right place.

Q: The Knights of the Old Republic game for Xbox has some interesting new rules about using different kinds of crystals to get different effects from lightsabers. It also introduces a new basic kind of Jedi, the Jedi sentinel. Since this game is based on the d20 rules, does that mean the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* will introduce rules for these different kinds of crystals and the new Jedi basic class?

A: Possibly, but probably not as a "Knights of the Old Republic Sourcebook." Instead, you'll most likely see articles on the Wizards website or in *Dungeon* magazine. Unfortunately, because of the way computer and console games are created, there isn't a long lag time between when the game design is completed and when it's released -- meaning that Wizards doesn't get an advance copy to study and adapt to the roleplaying game rules. And that means you usually have to wait for a freelancer to finish playing the game before he or she can write such an article.

The same is true, to a lesser extent, of new *Star Wars* novels and comic books. The "final version to print" phase is a bit longer with these types of products, though, so Wizards sometimes gets copies in advance, and the freelancers who write articles on such things for the Wizards *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* website are right on top of them.

But try to remember that we're a lot like you: fans waiting for the latest news about *Star Wars*. We don't have access to a secret store of game data; we make it up as we go along, just like when we were gamers who *didn't* work for a roleplaying game company. If you're dying to use something you just read in a book or saw in a video game, and Wizards hasn't released official rules for it yet, why not take a stab at writing up your own rules for it? If an official version comes out later, and your group prefers it, you can always switch over.



About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](http://www.thegamemechanics.com) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*. (Download them for free at www.thegamemechanics.com.)

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Jedi Counseling 37: Up the Walls

[JD Wiker](#)

Is it possible to make ranged Attacks of Opportunity? How much damage does a Cathar with the Martial Arts feat do with an unarmed attack? How far can you really move when using the feat Up the Walls? And can a lightsaber deflect a shot from an ion gun without shutting down? Designer JD Wiker tackles these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: In the *Hero's Guide*, the feat Up the Walls states: "You can take part of *one* of your move actions on a wall . . ." Does this mean that a character can only move on a wall for a single move action? For example, could the character spend both move actions moving along the same wall: 2 meters to get on the wall, move about 16 meters, then 2 meters to get off? If Up the Walls is good for only one move, it is very limited.

A: Up the Walls is only useful for short bursts of movement; it's not meant to let you stay up there for long periods. So, yes, a character could move on the wall only for a single move action at a time -- though he could, if he were moving twice in the round, use the ability again as his next move action. He still has to "touch down" at the beginning and end of each such move, though.

Q: Can Up the Walls be combined with Burst of Speed? It is a prerequisite, after all.

A: No, for the reasons stated in the previous answer. Think of it this way: Burst of Speed lets you move fast enough to run up the wall during a round, just not fast enough to stay up there for the whole six seconds.

Q: Can a character use the discblade (from the *Hero's Guide*) as a melee weapon without a penalty if he has the appropriate Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat? Or would it incur the -4 penalty for using a ranged weapon for melee purposes?

A: It would incur the usual -4 penalty, just as throwing a lightsaber incurs a -4 penalty. The discblade is meant to be thrown, not wielded in melee, so even being proficient with throwing it doesn't negate the penalty for using it in a nonstandard way.



Q: We were talking the other night around my game table, and we all seem to recall reading something about ranged Attacks of Opportunity somewhere, but we can't find anything on it. Do they exist, or was it just wishful thinking?

A: Wishful thinking. The idea behind Attacks of Opportunity is that you're swinging your melee weapon around you more or less constantly, and anybody standing in the way gets incidentally attacked. Most people, however, think of it as *pouncing*: "If someone comes within my reach, I'm going to pounce on him." But the visualization the designers had in mind was that a melee weapon in constant motion is going to cross paths with an enemy who isn't focusing on staying out of the way -- and the person swinging the weapon isn't going to divert the weapon's course, the way he might if the person in the adjacent square was an *ally* who wasn't paying attention.

Now, that's a relatively easy visualization for melee weapons. But now think of it in terms of ranged weapons -- a blaster, for example. When you're fighting with a blaster, you're not just firing randomly into the squares around you (not unless you like running out of ammo), so the idea that somebody just happens to be in your random line of fire doesn't quite work. Therefore, no ranged Attacks of Opportunity.

Q: I'm planning on creating a Cathar soldier for my next character: a kind of martial artist. Now, Cathars have natural weapons -- claws that deal 1d6 points of damage. So when my Cathar soldier takes the Martial Arts feat, does he deal 1d4 points of damage, 1d6 points of damage, or 1d4 + 1d6 points of damage?

A: When using Martial Arts, you have a choice of dealing either your regular unarmed attack damage, or your martial arts damage. But you don't get to combine them. That would seem to be a disadvantage to species with natural weapons, but it's the price you pay for being able to deal more damage at 1st level than the average character.

Q: If a Jedi took apart an old lightsaber and used some of the parts to build a new one, would he still receive the +1 circumstance bonus for building his own lightsaber? Is this still true if the crystal is one of the used parts? I ask because it's my understanding of the rules that the crystal, being the key piece and the one that takes the most personal work, is what really attunes the saber to the Jedi.



A: That's true, and it points out the real question here: Is the Jedi simply reassembling the functional components in a different handle, or is he rebuilding the weapon entirely? The circumstance bonus for the lightsaber is for "constructing" it, which includes all of the steps listed in the rules. Merely *assembling* a lightsaber from the parts of another lightsaber isn't the same thing. Now, if the Jedi were to disassemble the original lightsaber, then go through the process of constructing a lightsaber from the very beginning, then yes, he'd get the +1 circumstance bonus.

Q: In the *Hero's Guide*, it lists a rather hefty penalty to Force skills for using cybernetics. For every cybernetic component a character has, there is a -2 penalty to all Force Skills. So, Luke Skywalker has a -2 to these due to his hand. How large a penalty would you imagine Darth Vader has? Since it is generally accepted that he is "more machine now than man," I imagine that he would probably have to concentrate just to use the Force to lift a pencil. I understand that the rules are optional, but their application doesn't make any sense when you take this into account.

A: Actually, that's not what the rules say. Take another look. The rule on page 128 of the *Hero's Guide* states that "Each cybernetic component . . . results in a -2 penalty on Force dice results." Force dice refers to spending a Force Point, not making a check using a Force skill. That's something completely different. So Luke Skywalker only takes a -2 penalty when he uses a Force Point.

Q: Do cybernetic limbs use power sources to function, and, if so, can cybernetic limbs be affected by Drain Energy? If so, what category for vitality cost would they fall under?

A: Cybernetic components do indeed use power sources, but they draw so little energy that they don't need to be replaced all that often. For the purposes of Drain Energy, cybernetic components should be treated like lightsabers or vibro weapons: They use an energy cell.

Q: Can a Jedi use his deflect ability to deflect a blast from an ion gun? Wouldn't the lightsaber suffer ion damage

and possibly shut off if a Jedi used it to deflect the ion blast?

A: A Jedi can indeed use his lightsaber to deflect a shot from an ion gun, and succeeding won't cause the lightsaber to short out and shut off. However, if the target of the ion blast is the lightsaber itself, while the dodge bonus from the Deflect (defense) applies, the lightsaber will still short out and shut off if the ion attack succeeds. So, in other words, the lightsaber benefits from the wielder's ability to deflect ion gun bolts, but it's still at risk.

Q: Is it possible to use the skill Illusion to create duplicates of yourself (perhaps to fool an enemy)? In the Dark Horse Comics story "Darkness," the dark Jedi Volfe Karkko deflects one of Quinlan Vos's attacks and disappears, creating an illusion of various unruly-looking creatures around Vos. So is it possible to create a duplicate -- or several duplicates -- to draw fire while the actual target hides?



A: Certainly, and this is a fine example of using Illusion cleverly. It's pretty clear that you've used an illusion -- thus giving the viewers the "reasonable doubt" they need to attempt a saving throw -- but those who fail the save won't know which of you is the real you, and thus, which to attack.

Q: Are Intelligence bonuses retroactive when calculating skill points? For example: A character with 13 Intelligence increases her Intelligence to 14 at 4th level. Does she gain an extra four points to spend (one each for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th level), or does she gain just one point (for 4th level)?

A: Intelligence modifiers are not retroactive. So if you raise your Intelligence for any reason, the increase in skill points applies only to levels you gain from that point onward -- not to your previous levels. So, to use your example, a character who goes from a 13 Intelligence to a 14 at 4th level gets only the one extra skill point for 4th level, and gains no additional skill points for her 1st, 2nd, and 3rd levels.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](http://www.thegamemechanics.com) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*. (Download them for free at www.thegamemechanics.com.)

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Jedi Counseling 38: Tech Talk

[*JD Wiker*](#)

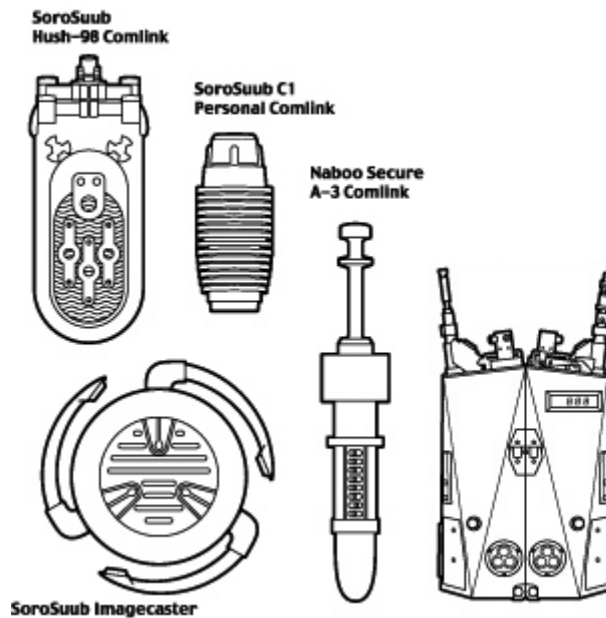
Why don't scout walkers have better armor? Can I use Force Light to "counter" dark side powers? And just what are the limits of technology in the *Star Wars* universe? Designer JD Wiker answers these [*Star Wars Roleplaying Game*](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: In my campaign, I've had players think of creative uses for some of the equipment in the revised core rulebook. They think of ideas such as interfacing code cylinders to datapads and creating a sort of recording device without actually getting a recording rod. Is that possible? Could you also interface other equipment with a datapad -- say, interface an actual recording rod and get a live feed of what someone is saying if the rod is placed near them and you are a distance away from them?

A: Is it possible? That's up to you, since it's your campaign. We really don't know the mechanics of how datapads and other electronic devices work in the *Star Wars* universe, so, as GMs, we have to make educated guesses. At best, we can extrapolate from modern technology and its analogs in *Star Wars* what a given piece of equipment can do. For example, a code cylinder is essentially a magnetic-strip keycard with a few more bells and whistles. Can you attach one of those to a PDA and create a storage device? Well, no -- not without a special adapter, and the magnetic strip wouldn't store more than about one kilobyte of information, anyway. (Though, admittedly, my digital camera works like an external hard drive, which makes sense, when you think about it.)



Illustrations from the *Arms & Equipment Guide*.

The trick to adjudicating jury-rigging in roleplaying games is to ask the players to describe how their brilliant new invention would work, then look for logic gaps that show they might not have thought the idea the whole way through. ("We stick the code cylinder in the datapad's code cylinder port!" "Datapads don't have code cylinder ports.") If you can't find a flaw in their logic, you can have the device work only once or twice before failing (perhaps catastrophically); you could even warn them, in-game, that something might be wrong. ("Okay, the data stores on the code cylinder, but it's taking a really, really long time for your datapad to resume its ordinary functions.")

Or you could just rely on the old GM chestnut: an impossible-to-hit DC. ("You rolled a 32? Okay, it looks like it's going to work, but then the code cylinder shorts out.") And if the players complain, remember that the reason

they're even doing this in the first place is that they're using the wrong equipment for the job -- rather like trying to saw a plank of wood in half with a steak knife.

Q: Is there an earpiece or something for Humans and the like that can directly translate a certain language (or any language), similar to the tizowym from *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*? I know from experience that it can get annoying for a player or party to sneak into a Hutt palace, for example, with a big, slow protocol droid and have to listen in on a conversation because none of them speak Huttese.

A: Protocol droids exist because wearable translators either don't exist or are so difficult to make that they're far, far more expensive than buying a droid. Sure, it's annoying to have to smuggle a protocol droid into a Hutt palace, but rather than providing a piece of "shortcut technology" that lets the heroes avoid having to do so, why not make getting the droid in and out part of the challenge?

The *Star Wars* movies and books are full of examples where annoying tasks are turned into great comic relief -- Threepio discovering he's been "given" to Jabba, for example, then trying to translate the heroes' demands and ultimatums in a way so as not to anger the Hutt. In my own gaming, I often use such situations as an opportunity to do something different for a session or two, like handing NPC droid sheets to the players and telling them to roleplay those droids trying to finagle their way into the Hutt's court *and* survive long enough to accomplish their mission. It's a great way to keep the players involved in the stuff that doesn't focus on their characters, but that's crucial for the success of their heroes.



Q: I have a character in my campaign who has been given the nickname "Lightwielder." He often uses the skill Force Light to attack dark siders. When a dark sider tries to use a dark side skill or ability on him, such as Force Lightning, he counters with a wave of Force Light. Do the two opposing waves cancel each other out? Do they go past each other, affecting both characters? Or does the one with the higher roll take precedence, negating the lower roll (which is what I've been doing)?

A: None of the above. Force Light can't be used to "counter" anything. You should probably read over the skill again, along with Lightwielder's player, to refresh your memories on what the skill actually does. It removes Dark Side Points from dark siders, kills dark side spirits, and reduces the power of dark side sites. That's it. Force Light doesn't stop Force Lightning, Force Strike, Force Grip, or any other offensive skill.

It's also worth noting that skills generally can't be used to "counter" effects as they happen. Even if a character were to ready an action to use Force Light, for example, using it wouldn't change the effect of Force Lightning, Force Grip, or any other skill. The only way this might work is if you readied a skill that dealt enough damage to kill the opponent, or otherwise incapacitated the opponent, before he resolved his own skill use. (For example, hitting him with Force Strike as a readied action, and dealing enough damage to render him unconscious before he could hit you with Force Lightning.)

Obviously, there are exceptions to the "one skill can't counter another" rule -- the main one being the idea of opposed skill checks: Spot versus Hide, for example, or Disable Device versus Demolitions. But you shouldn't try too hard to apply the physics of light and dark in this way. Skills do what they say they do; nothing more than that.

Q: In a recent game I ran, the heroes encountered an Imperial AT-ST -- a scout walker, like the ones in *Return of the Jedi*. The group's soldier, who was closest, pulled his blaster pistol and started shooting -- and destroyed the AT-ST in two rounds!

This doesn't make much sense to me. Why is the Damage Reduction of an AT-ST's armor so low? *Wood* has the same DR! It just doesn't follow that the Empire would put its valuable soldiers inside what amounts to a wooden shack on legs.

A: It's possible that the DR of an AT-ST is too low at 5. It's also possible that you're misusing AT-STs in your

games, tactically speaking.

The AT-ST is a *scout* vehicle, which means that its primary job is reconnaissance. Despite its weaponry, it's not really a combat vehicle. Even if you do use it in combat, you have to keep in mind that its primary weapon -- its fire-linked blaster cannons -- has a range increment of 200 meters. That means it can fire those cannons out to 2,000 meters, well beyond the range of any blaster pistol (or even blaster rifle). In fact, the AT-ST can get as close as 402 meters (just outside the extreme range of a blaster rifle), and only suffer a -4 penalty to its primary weapon attacks. In situations like that, the AT-ST could have a DR of 0 and still be effective.

This sort of implies that the main problem with AT-STs in combat is how GMs use them. Keep this general rule in mind when using AT-STs: They're more like jeeps than tanks. Think about how you saw them used in *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. In *Empire*, they were escorts for the AT-ATs at the Battle of Hoth: a good distance from the Rebel troops, and not the main targets, anyway. Most likely, they were there to protect the backs and sides of the AT-ATs, which have all their weaponry in the front.

And *Return of the Jedi* illustrates the tactical error of using AT-STs in firefight situations. The Imperial commander on Endor brought the AT-STs in close to help contain unarmed prisoners. When the prisoners got weapons during the Ewok attack, the AT-STs didn't stick around to shoot at the prisoners; that was the stormtroopers' job. They went after the less well-armed Ewoks -- though that, obviously, proved to be a mistake, since the Ewoks had prepared traps for the AT-STs.



So, the AT-ST scout walker is quite vulnerable in close combat situations. It's really only dangerous in such situations if the enemy is poorly armed or poorly trained: sticks and rocks or blasters in the hands of people who don't have good ranged attack bonuses. If anything, the problem that you're having with AT-STs suggests that multifire and autofire may be too effective, when combined with characters who already have multiple attacks per round (due to Base Attack Bonuses).

Q: The feat Hatred indicates that it affects everyone in a 10-meter radius, but it is unclear if this energy is limited by walls or other obstructions. Does the effect penetrate walls, or is it contained by physical objects? For example, can a person hide behind a crate or be on the other side of a bulkhead in a space ship and not be affected?

A: No. Hatred affects everyone within 10 meters, whether they have cover or not. In general, if an effect allows a Reflex save, then cover probably "stops" the effect. Hatred, though, allows a Fortitude save, so it doesn't fall under that category. This is just a rule of thumb; some effects that grant Fortitude saves *are* blocked by intervening objects (such as stun grenades), but not this one.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of*

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Jedi Counseling 39: Big Deflections

[JD Wiker](#)

How big a blaster bolt can a Jedi deflect? Why don't blaster pistols provoke Attacks of Opportunity? And can I use Move Object to paralyze an opponent while my allies finish him off? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: Can a Jedi Deflect (attack) the bolt from a speeder bike? How about an AT-ST? An AT-AT? A starfighter? The turbolaser from a Star Destroyer? The blast from the Death Star? Just what is the upper limit for a Jedi's Deflect ability?

A: I think we might have been more clear about the limitations of deflection in the original core rulebook, but it's accepted that a Jedi cannot use Deflect against anything larger than personal weapons -- so starships and battle stations are out of the question. Still, we saw Qui-Gon Jinn use Deflect (defense) and Deflect (attack) against the STAPs in *The Phantom Menace*, so clearly vehicle weapons can be Deflected, as well.

Starship weapons are still out of the question, though, as a GM, you could make exceptions for personal weapons mounted on starships, like the belly gun on the *Millennium Falcon* (as seen in *The Empire Strikes Back*).

Q: On page 212 of the revised core rulebook, under "Making an Attack," it states that the attacker suffers a -4 penalty if he does not have the proper Starship Operation feat. Nothing is said about a Weapon Proficiency Group for starship weapons. However, on page 188, under the same subject for vehicles, it makes no such statement. There is, however, a Weapon Group Proficiency: Vehicle Weapons listed in feats. Do vehicle weapons need a proficiency feat while starship weapons do not?

A: The thing that's amiss here is that there's a listing for a vehicle weapons proficiency, when there's no such feat. Vehicle weapons do not require a feat to operate, any more than piloting or driving a vehicle requires a feat (though heavy weapons on a vehicle fall under the heavy weapons proficiency group, as always). Starship weapons *do* require the appropriate Starship Operations feat to operate correctly (meaning, to use them without suffering the -4 nonproficiency penalty).

While it can be argued that some starfighter weapons are no different to fire than the weapons of certain vehicles (such as the weapons of an airspeeder as opposed to the weapons of an A-wing), the same is not true of *all* vehicles and starfighters.

Q: In [Jedi Counseling 29](#), you stated: "Note, though, that if their 'blasters' were blaster *pistols*, they wouldn't provoke attacks of opportunity. Only ranged weapons that require two hands to operate provoke an attack of opportunity."

I would like further clarification concerning blaster pistols in melee range. Does a character not provoke while wielding a pistol because she has a free hand to block with? Would a character firing two pistols provoke because she has guns in both hands? Or is it that a two-handed gun is larger and more difficult to position in melee range while a pistol, being smaller, is easier to aim without dropping your defenses?

A: The latter is the more correct interpretation: Blaster pistols do not provoke an attack of opportunity because they're smaller and it's easier to bring them to bear on an opponent. Weapons that require both hands to operate (which is generally determined by the size of the weapon) are somewhat more difficult to maneuver into position, giving an adjacent opponent a bit more opportunity to interfere. (Admittedly, it's a thin dividing line, but we had to draw it somewhere.)

Blaster pistols in both hands don't fall under this category, because, despite the fact that both hands are occupied, they're occupied with separate weapons.

Q: On page 21 of the *Hero's Guide*, under the "Make it Fit" variant, it simply states that the Outlaw Tech can fit parts for larger vessels into smaller ones. What exactly does this mean in game terms? There seem to be no rules to support this or provide any benefit other than game color.

A: The Outlaw Tech's "Make it Fit" ability overcomes a limitation discussed in *Starships of the Galaxy*, on page 11: "Many weapons systems are designed for ships of a specific class (that is, starfighter, space transport, or capital ship). Placing one of these systems on a smaller class ship requires additional bracing, more power, and larger redesign requirements. Thus, some weapons cost double the listed emplacement points when installed on a smaller class ship." The "Make it Fit" ability allows the Outlaw Tech to put weapons on a ship one size category smaller than the category for which they were intended, *without* paying the additional emplacement point cost.

Q: If a character has a +6/+1 Base Attack Bonus, but also has a -2 Strength penalty, does he get to make two attacks at +4/-1, or does he lose the extra attack?

A: Multiple attacks gained by Base Attack Bonus are determined by Base Attack Bonus alone -- other modifiers don't figure in. Otherwise, a character with a BAB of +5 would get an additional attack for having a Strength (or Dexterity, for ranged weapons) of 12 or higher.

Q: Could you render an opponent immobile by the use of Move Object? If so, would he lose his Dexterity bonus to Defense? Would he be considered helpless and an eligible target for a coup de grace? Would you gain a Dark Side Point if the opponent died while in your Move Object hold?

A: You can certainly keep someone from leaving a given square using Move Object, but you can't keep them from acting in other ways. For example, someone held in a Move Object "grapple" can still take move actions, attack actions, and full-round actions as normal -- he just can't leave that square. So, for example, if he has a ranged weapon and can normally make five attacks with it in a full attack, he can still do it, even while held by Move Object.

So, plainly, such a character is not "immobile" in the strictest sense of the word, nor is he considered helpless, in the *rules* sense, and so is not eligible for a coup de grace (at least, not just because he's held in a Move Object "grapple").

Now, as for whether you gain a Dark Side Point for holding someone with Move Object, it depends on whether you're holding the victim for the purpose of letting someone else kill him. If you're just holding the person, and someone happens to kill him, that's not really your fault. If you're holding him so that he's unable to escape while your allies kill him (or so that he's stuck in place while some external effect kills him), then you're facilitating his death, and that's certainly grounds for a Dark Side Point (though your GM is the final arbiter of whether you deserve one or not).

Q: I understand that you do not add your Strength (or Dexterity) bonus to hit with Kinetic Combat (or presumably to damage, either), since Move Object is a mental act. Do you add anything to the attack or damage roll for your Intelligence score, or for any feats you possess, such as Weapon Focus? Or is it simply the Base Attack Bonus added to the attack roll, and base lightsaber damage dealt?



A: With Kinetic Combat, you use only your Base Attack Bonus, Weapon Focus, increased lightsaber damage, and so on. Your Intelligence has nothing to do with it, and not even your physical Strength or Dexterity is relevant to your mental control of the lightsaber. And note that feats that increase your number of attacks don't apply in this case. "As though wielding it in your hands" refers to determining the attack bonus and damage.

Q: If you attack an opponent's weapon using Kinetic Combat (with or without the Sunder Feat), does he get an Attack of Opportunity against your lightsaber?

A: Yes. The lightsaber is physically within reach of an Attack of Opportunity, and it is a valid target for an Attack of Opportunity, so the opponent can strike back. Note that you cannot use Kinetic Combat to make an Attack of Opportunity yourself, however.

Q: How about if you attempt to disarm an opponent with Kinetic Combat?

A: Same answer -- unless, of course, you have the Improved Disarm feat.

Q: In the *Hero's Guide*, Split Force says you can split a Force skill to use against two targets rather than one, with a vitality cost of x2. It then states it can be split even more but doesn't mention the vitality cost. I decided that the number of targets should be the multiplier for the vitality loss. So a skill split once to use against two targets would have a vitality cost of x2, split twice to use against three targets would have x3, split three times to use against four targets would have x4, and so on.

Is this how it's supposed to work?

A: Close. For each time you double the vitality cost for Split Force, you can add one additional target. So splitting once for two targets is x2 vitality, splitting twice for three targets is x4 vitality, splitting three times for four targets is x8 vitality, and so on.

About the Author

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Jedi Counseling 40: Grenade Aid

[JD Wiker](#)

Can you use Battlemind against the Yuuzhan Vong? What should the Challenge Codes be for NPC starship crews? And why is the range increment for grenades only 4 meters? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



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Q: My character has managed to sneak up on a bounty hunter that has engaged my fellow party members on the other side. He has no knowledge of me standing behind him. My character is a scoundrel, so I have no special abilities (such as sneak attack). Do I still need to roll an attack roll to attack this opponent? I mean, "a blaster to the face is still a blaster to the face," right? Our GM had me make an attack roll while I was standing at point blank range. I missed and nearly got annihilated when the bounty hunter turned on me. Wouldn't I be allowed to make a coup de grace? What bonuses would I get otherwise?

A: Well, let's take a look at the rules for helpless defenders and the coup de grace, on pages 163–164 of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook. You can use a melee weapon to deliver a coup de grace on a helpless opponent (or a ranged weapon, if you're adjacent to the target). And if these conditions apply, you automatically hit, and automatically deal critical damage (that is, damage straight to wounds). Pretty lethal.

However, the one thing that doesn't quite fit here is the "helpless" part. A helpless foe is defined on page 163 as one who is "bound, sleeping, unconscious, or otherwise at your mercy." Plainly, the bounty hunter in your example doesn't really fit into any of these categories. However, the text goes on to say that you can sometimes treat an opponent as helpless if you can get adjacent to him without him knowing it. That would seem to support your side of the argument.

But there's another caveat here: "If the target is in combat or some other tense situation" -- and you said that he was engaged with your fellow party members, so that qualifies -- "then that target can't be considered helpless." So despite your clever strategy of sneaking up on him, you still have to make a normal attack roll to hit him; no automatic coup de grace in this case.

Q: If a character has levels in the dark side marauder prestige class and later does something heroic to turn back to the light side, subsequently multiclassing to a Jedi class, what would become of his dark side marauder levels? Would he keep those levels, resisting the dark side abilities (such as Rage)? Or would it be better to convert them to levels of another class (such as Jedi guardian or Force adept)?

A: It depends on whether or not your GM allows dark side characters to convert levels of a dark side class to levels of a Jedi class. (It's not a guaranteed option.) So the former dark side marauder might have to keep his dark side marauder levels, and he would have to avoid using any of the dark side abilities (feats and skills) that he picked up while he was a dark side marauder. (Hey, no one said it was easy being good.)

But, if your GM allows it, the former dark side marauder could convert levels from his dark side marauder prestige class to Jedi levels on a two-for-one basis. That is, two levels of dark side marauder would buy him one level of either Jedi guardian or Jedi consular. And remember that a dark side character wishing to convert dark side levels can have no more Dark Side Points than half his Wisdom score -- thus, only tainted, not fully dark, characters can exercise this option.

Q: In a recent Jedi Counseling, you said to assign starships a Challenge Code based on the skill of the pilot. Yet with starships, the only real statistic given is usually just "unskilled" or "skilled" or some such. What would the Challenge Code for these simplified NPC skills be?

A: Good question! Let's use the following Challenge Codes:

Crew Quality Challenge Code

Untrained	A
Normal	B
Skilled	C
Expert	D
Ace	E

Q: How many people can restore the shields on a space transport? The rules are a bit vague on how many shield repair stations are on any given ship, and my group currently has two R2 units and a tech specialist bringing the shields back up whenever the ship takes a hit. This seems slightly unbalancing to me, so I thought I'd write in for your take on the matter.

A: We didn't spell out how many such "stations" there are on a ship simply because only one person can be the designated "shield operator," and thus, only one character can make the check at any given time. However, as with most skills, others can assist, using the Cooperation rules on page 73. So, for example, the tech specialist could be the "leader," and the two R2 units could cooperate. They'd make the same skill check (against a DC 10), but success on their part would give only a +2 circumstance bonus to the tech specialist. So it's not a "you restored some shield points, now it's my turn" situation, or even a "you failed, let me try" situation.

Q: Can you use Battlemind against the Yuuzhan Vong? The reason I ask is because it grants a Force bonus, and the Yuuzhan Vong are invisible to the Force. Does the bonus still apply, and if it does, why?

A: Yes, you can use Battlemind against the Yuuzhan Vong. It's not directly affecting them, nor is it a Sense-based ability that operates by sensing where the opponent is. It simply makes you better in combat by enhancing your concentration and commitment.

Q: Why is the range increment for grenades only 4 meters? I mean, if I wanted to throw it 40 meters, I'd have a -10 penalty on my attack, yet when I throw a baseball, for example, I should have an average of about 50 meters (to throw where I want it to go). So why isn't the range increment a little farther -- say, 20 to 30 meters? The rule makes it seem as if we have to throw the grenade underhand.

A: The reason grenades have a small range increment is because grenades aren't as balanced and aerodynamic as baseballs. They're heavier, and the weight isn't balanced the same way. So they're not going to travel as far, or as smoothly, as a baseball. In fact, grenades and other thrown objects are limited to a maximum of *five* range increments, rather than the usual ten, so the maximum range is actually 20 meters (which I'll grant is a fairly short distance).

But, that aside, consider how grenades work in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*: You don't have to hit a dodging, weaving target -- you have to hit a square, which only has a Defense of 10. So, at 20 meters, the Defense of the target square is effectively only 20 (base Defense 10, plus the -10 modifier to the attack roll for five range increments: -0 at 0-3, -2 at 4-7, -4 at 8-11, -6 at 12-15, -8 at 16-19, and -10 at 20), whereas the Defense of a person standing in that square could be 25 or 30, or even higher. In other words, even with the range penalty, it's often easier to hit a target with a grenade than with a blaster bolt. And let's not forget that grenades deal damage to targets in adjacent squares, as well, making them even more effective.

Q: In my game the other night, I threw some droids at my players (all Jedi), and to mess the heroes up a bit, all the droids had cortosis armor, deactivating the Jedi's lightsabers. This frustrated the players, but not as much as



my next call: Once they realized that attacking the armored droids was annoying, they started attacking their weapons.

One character attacked a droid's light repeating blaster and destroyed the weapon, but this character had the Cleave feat and wanted to attack the blaster held by the next droid. The player argued that the rules state that Cleave only specifies an opponent and that a blaster could be an opponent. But to me, striking blasters held by two or more droids changes the direction of the lightsaber too much (strike down for the first blaster, and then change direction to slash up for the second blaster) to be considered a fluid Cleave motion. Please clarify.

A: Hmm. Interesting situation. My ruling would be that yes, a character with the Cleave feat could carry on to attack another weapon after destroying the first weapon, since nothing in the Attack an Object rules states that you can't use Cleave (or, by extension, Great Cleave, for that matter). And the physics of lightsaber motion don't really have anything to do with it. The combat system is abstract, after all, and doesn't take such factors into consideration. So, in short, I'd allow a character with Cleave to use it against an adjacent opponent's weapon. In fact, I'd even allow a character to dispatch one opponent's weapon, and then attack an adjacent *opponent* (not just his weapon), or vice-versa.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](http://www.thegamemechanics.com) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*. (Download them for free at www.thegamemechanics.com.)

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Jedi Counseling 41: Fake Death Stars

[JD Wiker](#)

Can a phobic species ever overcome that phobia? Does elevation make a difference in space combat? How big can an illusion be? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."

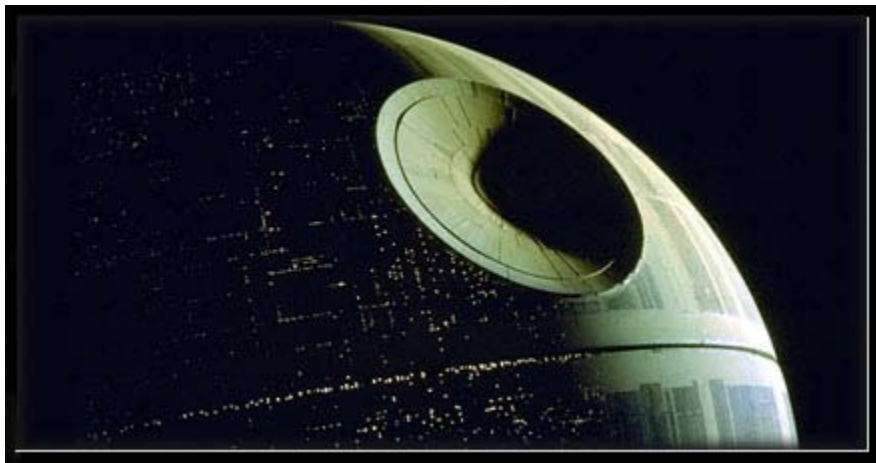


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Q: Can the phobias of various species -- such as the Ubese's xenophobia, the Selonian's agoraphobia, or even the Myneyrsh's technophobia -- be bought off with skill points? If not, is there any other way to get rid of them?

A: The shortest answer is no. You *can* roleplay around them to an extent, but they're there for a reason. The slightly longer answer is that you could create a special "non-phobic" feat that a character can take to remove the effects of a species phobia, but that's only a suggestion, and not an official change to the rules.

Q: I have read your errata updates on the Illusion skill, and I have yet to see any ruling as to the limits of the physical size of the illusion you create. The problem is that my players started small, creating illusions of monsters, fire, heroes running away to fool the enemy, and so on. Then, they escalated to creating illusions of starships -- first space transports and then capital ships. If they kept going, could they create something as big as an illusory Death Star?



The only reference to spatial considerations seems to be the Range Limit (on page 92 of the revised core rulebook), which dictates that a Jedi can extend his illusion out to a range of 1,000 km. So should I assume that a Jedi could create a mini Death Star, complete with an illusory planet-destroying superlaser, and all for a measly 10 vitality points a round? A 10th-level Jedi with a good Constitution score could hold that up for 6 to 8 rounds, I'd say. Doesn't this seem a little too good, or am I mistaken in my assumption? Please clarify this issue once and for all.

A: It might help you to know that the original inspiration for the Illusion skill came from the *Knights of the Old Republic* comic book series from Dark Horse, in which the character Aleema Keto created an illusion of a starship so large that it hid a fleet of smaller ships. Thus, the intent of Illusion is that you can create an image of anything, no matter how large, so long as all of it is inside the maximum range.

Q: Do you need any particular weapon group proficiency to use a weapon with a bayonet, or the butt of the gun in melee?

A: A weapon with a bayonet really fits into the category of "spear," which is a primitive weapon. The butt of a gun is an improvised weapon, for which you would normally take the -4 nonproficiency penalty to attacks. However, the Improvisational Fighting feat from the *Hero's Guide* allows you to get around that penalty.

Q: Are there any rules about the angle of attack in space and air combat? For example, what happens when two opponents are on a different elevation, with one pointed down and rotated differently than the other?

A: We deliberately chose not to include elevation rules in the starships and vehicle combat rules because the system is designed to be abstract. What's more, there's no easy way to keep track of elevation. If you want a rule of thumb, though, it's pretty easy to use a die to mark relative elevation, and determine the range between vessels by calculating the hypotenuse (the old $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$ formula from geometry class).

Q: During the course of a game session, our group of heroes encountered a fallen Jedi whom we were trying to capture using non-lethal methods. I had the highest initiative, and I stated that I wanted to ignite my lightsaber and attack the Jedi if he made any aggressive moves toward me. Well, on his action, the fallen Jedi used Move Object to knock the lightsaber out of my hands, and then he drew *his* lightsaber. At that point, I asked the GM if I still got the attack action I readied. The GM said no.

Even though I no longer had my lightsaber, could I have used my attack action to throw a punch at the fallen Jedi, or use Move Object right back at him? I hadn't used a move action, either, when I stated that I would wait to see what our foe did.

A: Actually, your readied action to attack as soon as the fallen Jedi took an aggressive action toward you would have occurred when the GM declared that the fallen Jedi used Move Object against your lightsaber -- *before* the fallen Jedi's Move Object attempt had resolved. In effect, your readied action resolves on the initiative count just before the initiative count of the action that triggers it.

So, if you readied an attack on initiative count 24, and the fallen Jedi triggered that attack on initiative count 13, you perform your attack, effectively, on initiative count 13.1. (Technically, it's count 13, but before the fallen Jedi, and I find this tiny distinction helps clarify examples a bit better.) And, of course, your initiative now drops from 24 to 13, for future rounds.

Q: When using the Spirited Charge feat from the *Hero's Guide*, you triple your Strength if using a pole weapon. Most pole weapons can be used with two hands, which normally gives a x 1.5 damage bonus. How do these two bonuses combine?

A: First, you're misreading the Spirited Charge feat a bit. It doesn't triple your Strength -- it triples the damage (with a polearm). But, to answer the overall question, you'd calculate the total damage (damage roll + 1.5 x Strength), then triple the result.

Q: Is the damage bonus from Strength, mastercrafted weaponry, or the Weapon Specialization feat multiplied as well?

A: Yes, though you wouldn't multiply extra damage *dice*, such as the sneak attack damage dice of the bounty hunter prestige class, for example.

Q: When is a PC or NPC part of "the group" in terms of figuring the average level for experience points in a single encounter?

A: If a character participates in an experience-generating situation (winning a combat, defeating a trap, negotiating a social interaction, or the like), the character is entitled to a share of the experience. So a character who pitches in is considered "part of the group," and thus affects the average level of the party.

Q: Does the Shot on the Run feat let your character have full movement while engaging in multifire or autofire?

A: No. Any time you take multiple attacks during your action, it's a full attack action. Shot on the Run states that it applies "when using an attack action," which, obviously, isn't the same thing as a full attack action.

Q: Here's the situation: The villain has grabbed Hero A by the coat collar -- in other words, grappled him -- and is lifting Hero A so that his feet are off the ground. Hero A is fatigued due to wound point loss. The villain is holding Hero A over a vat of molten lava. Just then, Hero B comes around the corner and fires at the villain.

Is Hero B considered to be firing into a melee? The villain and Hero A are locked together, but I figured that since they aren't performing the erratic movement associated with melee combat, the penalty wouldn't apply.

A: Since Hero A and the villain are grappling, they're in melee with each other. So Hero B takes the usual -4 penalty to his attack roll for firing into melee.

Q: Is the villain considered flat-footed? Again, the two are technically in a melee, but the villain is not actively moving or prepared to defend himself.

A: The villain is not flat-footed. If he's grappling another character, he's in combat, which means that he has acted (since otherwise he couldn't have initiated a grapple). A character is considered flat-footed if he hasn't acted yet in combat, so the villain doesn't qualify.

Q: If the villain drops Hero A into the vat of molten lava, can Hero A make a Reflex save to catch the edge of the vat and save himself? From what I understand of the fatigued condition, this should be all right.

A: A character who is fatigued isn't incapacitated, so yes, Hero A would still be able to make a Reflex save to catch the edge of the vat and not fall into the lava.

Q: In the *Hero's Guide*, the Maximize Force technique states that "all variable, numeric effects are maximized." Does that mean that when a character uses this technique, he is considered to have rolled a 20 and that all dice of the power are maximized? Or does he still roll the d20, and only then are the dice maximized?

A: It's only the *effects* that are maximized. The skill check is not an effect. So, if you were making a Heal Another check, for example, you'd still make the skill check, but the die roll for the amount of vitality, wounds, or ability points restored would be treated as though you had rolled the maximum.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark* Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](http://www.thegamemechanics.com) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*. (Download them for free at www.thegamemechanics.com.)

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Jedi Counseling 42: Wing Things

[*JD Wiker*](#)

Can a Vor use weapons while it's flying? How fast do dark side spirits travel in the Force? What are slave circuits, and how do they work? Can you use Combat Expertise while you're grappled? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



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Q: I'm considering playing a Vor and have some questions about their combat capabilities while airborne. Vorsk's wings are attached to their arms, so won't that render them incapable of using weapons while in flight since they're using their hands and arms to fly?

A: That seems reasonable. A Vor would have to land to use its hands or arms for something other than flying.

Q: For that matter, could the Flyby Attack feat count as a bonus soldier feat for a flight-capable race? The feat is designed for aerial combat, so it would make sense for winged soldiers to learn the trick as readily as any other soldier bonus feat.

A: As an official change to the rules, I don't see that it's necessary. A character gets a minimum of seven feats over a 20-level career. Certainly, a player can spare one of those.

Q: And just to beat the horse to death, could the possession of wings give a character other bonuses? For example, if a character can use his wings freely (isn't overly encumbered, has room to spread them, and so on), could he get bonuses to Jump or Balance checks, or slow himself if he falls?

A: That's really up to your GM, but it certainly could fall under the rules for the GM granting a +2 circumstance bonus.

Q: How long does it take for a dark side spirit to initiate the Force travel ability? Is it a move action, an attack action, or a full-round action? And can you retry every round if the Will save is failed?

A: It's a full-round action, and yes, you can try again after one day.

Q: If a PC has the Starfighter Evasion class ability from the Jedi ace prestige class and the Starship Evasion class ability from the starship ace prestige class, does the PC get to use both abilities (make two opposed Pilot checks to reduce damage) when piloting a starfighter, or does the starship ace ability replace the Jedi ace version?

A: It's the same ability (just granted by two different classes); it does not allow you to make two separate checks. That's why it states that you can only make an evasion check once per round.

Q: Also, the text states that a PC can be familiar with only one ship at a time, even if he has levels in both Jedi Ace and Starship Ace, but do the familiarity bonuses stack?

A: No, because they're competence bonuses, and competence bonuses do not stack.

Q: When in combat with an enemy ship that has a slave circuit, can you try to use that circuit to issue commands to the ship?

A: Sure, but the crew of the target starship doesn't have to sit still for it. I'd allow them an opposed Computer Use check to regain control.

Q: If a group of ships -- for example, a freighter plus its escort -- all use the information from one person's calculation of a hyperspace jump, will they all arrive at the same time at the location? Or will the random effects of hyperspace affect each ship differently, possibly meaning that the ships arrive hours apart?

A: Using the same information doesn't guarantee that the ships will arrive together. However, this is a perfect example of a good use for slave circuits: If they jump together, they arrive together.

Q: The description for the Echani Martial Arts feat in the *Hero's Guide* grants an increased threat range against prone targets, specifying "when making melee attacks." Should this be "when making unarmed melee attacks"? All of the other Martial Arts feats specify that characters have to be unarmed to gain the benefits of the feat (including the other two Echani feats.)

A: Yes, Echani Martial Arts should specify "*unarmed* melee attacks."

Q: Can a changeling imitate a creature or alien species that has more than two arms or legs? If so, do they gain the use of these limbs or the bonuses of having extra limbs?

A: No, unless the specific species listing states otherwise.

Q: Can a changeling use its impersonation ability at the same time as its transformation ability?

A: Yes.

Q: Can a changeling use one Minor Transformation at the same time as one Major Transformation?

A: No. Major Transformation is the improved version of Minor Transformation. Even if you tried to choose different benefits, you're still limited by the rules for Transformation: Choose one benefit.

Q: Unlike *Dungeons & Dragons*, *Star Wars* uses class bonuses to Defense. When you are grappled, do you lose this class bonus? Do you lose your Combat Expertise bonus?

A: You keep your class bonus, since you don't use your class bonus to Defense when grappling, though you do lose your Dexterity bonus to Defense. However, since you *do* lose any dodge bonuses to Defense when you lose your Dexterity bonus to Defense, you *do* lose your dodge bonus from the Combat Expertise feat.

Q: Is there any way my Herglic Force warrior can threaten a square while unarmed? It seems unrealistic that a knife with a 2-meter reach that deals 1d4 points of damage can make attacks of opportunity while my fist of death (with a 4-meter reach and dealing 6d6+5 points of damage) does not. I could understand requiring Martial Arts or something similar, but never? It seems that highly trained martial artists should always be considered armed *and* dangerous.

A: A character with the Martial Arts feat *does* threaten adjacent squares. It's implied in the description of the Martial Arts feat, but it's spelled out in the rules for unarmed attacks found in Chapter 8: Combat: "A character with the Martial Arts feat . . . is considered to be armed."

Q: Does Jedi battle armor keep its Damage Reduction against lightsabers? On page 55 of the *Power of the Jedi*

Sourcebook, it says, ". . . the greatest Jedi armorers developed battle armor that was the best possible protection against a lightsaber blow," but it doesn't state that the armor can withstand lightsabers.

A: The description of Jedi battle armor should specify that its Damage Reduction applies against lightsabers. (We actually mentioned this once before, in Jedi Counseling #7.)

Q: Here's a situation that came up in our game recently. On round 1, a Jedi guardian used Deflect (defense), thus losing a move action in the next round. Then, in the next round, the same Jedi guardian used Spring Attack, moved more than 2 meters, and attacked an opponent. Is this possible?

A: Simply put, no. Spring Attack doesn't allow you to ignore the lost move action from using Deflect (defense) or Deflect (attack). It simply allows you to break up your move action -- and the Jedi guardian in this example didn't have a move action to break up.

Q: In the revised core rulebook, one of the pieces of equipment that can be fitted to a droid is a weapon mount, but it doesn't state what size of weapon the mount can hold. Would it be safe to assume that it can hold a weapon the same size as the droid (for example, a one-handed weapon)?

A: Yes, that's a reasonable assumption.

Q: If that's the case, is it possible to mount a larger weapon (for example, a two-handed weapon) on the droid? Does that just take two weapon mounts?

A: Yes. But it requires a special stabilized weapon mount, which is covered in the new [Ultimate Adversaries](#) book.

Q: If the weapon mounted is a blaster, what happens when the droid rolls a natural 1 on an attack and the weapon's power pack runs out of power (especially in cases where the droid doesn't have arms to replace the power pack)?

A: Remember that the "natural 1 equals dead power pack" rule is an option for those who don't want to track individual shots. If you're using that rule, though, you can assume that a droid with a weapon on a weapon mount is using its own power source to power the weapon. A droid using a separate weapon (such as a battle droid with a blaster rifle) uses the weapon's power pack. That being the case, a weapon on a weapon mount won't run out of power when the droid rolls a natural 1.

Q: Then are there any adverse effects to the droid when it rolls a natural 1 on an attack?

A: Yes. The attack automatically misses.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](#) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*. (Download them for free at www.thegamemechanics.com.)

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Jedi Counseling 43: Droid Drain

[JD Wiker](#)

How do you calculate hardness and wound points for armor? Does Drain Energy really shut down droid heroes? Does Kinetic Combat allow a character to use his Strength bonus when attacking? And how does Sith poison really work? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: Is it theoretically possible for an otherwise good Jedi with a very high Wisdom score to take a dark side or Sith prestige class that only requires around 4 Dark Side Points? This doesn't make much sense to me, but a Force adept in my campaign -- who will stop at nothing to destroy evil -- had a few rash actions that got her some Dark Side Points, and she really wants to have the dark side devotee prestige class. She meets the requirements of the class, and the player says that the rules don't forbid her to do it, but it really doesn't make sense to me. Can you help me out?

A: The player is correct: There's nothing in the rules that says the character couldn't take on a dark side prestige class and remain a basically good character. That's actually part of the flexibility of the system; characters can flirt with the dark side without fully committing to the path of evil. It's just a bit more tempting, once you take the dark side prestige class, to edge a little further down the path -- perhaps with a few more of those "rash actions."

Q: I'm a little concerned about the Force skill Drain Energy and how it affects droid characters. Drain Energy is a power that any Force user (light or dark) with access to the Alter feat can use, even unskilled, for 1 Dark Side Point and 12 vitality points. It's also a power that automatically passes without a check on droids, while not allowing a saving throw.

In other words, Drain Energy is a free power available to virtually every Force user that can be used unskilled and that completely shuts down a droid hero -- without even a DC for the skill check -- while preventing the droid hero from making a saving throw to avoid the effects. That seems very, very wrong. Shouldn't droid PCs have a Will saving throw against this?

A: Technically, no droid -- hero or otherwise -- gets a save versus Drain Energy. That's one of the drawbacks of choosing to play a droid character. Remember, though, that a droid PC has plenty of advantages that make suffering the occasional shutdown an acceptable trade-off. For example, droid PCs are immune to inhaled gases and the stun effects of blasters.



However, if you and your group feel that's unfair, there's no reason you shouldn't allow droid heroes -- or any droids, for that matter -- a saving throw, just as any other character would get.

Q: Can a Jedi or Sith character use his lightsaber to deflect shots from starship weapons?

A: No, just personal weapons and vehicle weapons (which are generally just heavy personal weapons).

Q: Along the same lines, could a Jedi or Sith character use Dissipate Energy on a successful save against a starship weapon, assuming he can make the Fortitude save?

A: Yes.

Q: The Teräs Käsı feat allows you to block a single melee weapon attack. Could a person wearing something like cortosis armor use the feat to hit the blade of a lightsaber and deactivate it without taking any damage?

A: Yes, that's a reasonable interpretation of the two rules.

Q: When a character uses the Kinetic Combat feat (as described in the *Hero's Guide*), her weapon acts as if she were attacking with the weapon in her hands. Does this mean that her Strength bonus should be added to attack and damage rolls?

A: You can do anything with a melee weapon using Kinetic Combat that you can do with a melee weapon in your hands, including adding a Strength bonus (or subtracting a Strength penalty). However, there are a few exceptions:

- Your number of attacks with a melee weapon using Kinetic Combat is not based on your BAB, but on your ranks in Move Object. (See the feat description for details.)
 - You cannot use any ability that requires the melee weapon to actually be in your hands, such as the Lightsaber Defense feats.
 - The melee weapon being manipulated via Kinetic Combat does not threaten adjacent squares.
-

Q: I recently noticed that you don't list the hardness and wound points of armor in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook or the *Arms & Equipment Guide*. Why not? It's stated that armor provides protection to the wearer, but not to itself. So at what point would the armor of a particular character be damaged? At what point would it be destroyed? Or is armor invulnerable while it's being worn?



A: Armor is *not* invulnerable, whether it's being worn or not. However, for simplicity's sake, the rules don't treat armor as degrading when it absorbs damage for the wearer. Armor is damaged only if it's specifically attacked, just as weapons are only damaged if *they're* specifically attacked. Thus, listing hardness and wound points wasn't a high priority.

Still, if you need to determine a suit of armor's hardness and wounds, you can use a simple formula: The armor's hardness is equal to its DR (which is redundant, since the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* doesn't actually use the term "hardness"), and the wound points equal $(1 + DR) \times 2$.

Q: Naturally, this brings up another question. Would destroyed armor provide Damage Reduction? It seems like it wouldn't.

A: As a general rule, I'd say that armor stops providing DR once it's taken all its original wound points in damage. Repairing the armor requires a DC 10 Repair check, at a cost of 1/5th the total cost of the armor. This restores all the armor's wound points.

Q: The High Force Mastery feat states that you can take any Force skill that is a full round action and condense it into an attack action. Since Move Object says that an attack is a full round action, and Kinetic Combat is based on Move Object (you need 12 ranks in Move Object before you can take the feat), can you essentially use one attack action as your Kinetic Combat (using High Force Mastery at double the Vitality Points) and still have the rest of your attacks open?

A: Not exactly. You'd get one attack action: the Kinetic Combat use of Move Object, reduced from a full round action to an attack action by High Force Mastery. Since neither of these feats grants additional attack actions, you're left with only a move action.

However, if you also had Heroic Surge, you could use High Force Mastery to reduce the Kinetic Combat use of Move Object down to an attack action, and take that as your Heroic Surge attack. Then you could take the rest of your attacks with your normal actions for the round.

Q: The Sith Master ability (gained when a character reaches 10th level in the Sith Lord prestige class) grants the character the power to "lend" any of his ranks in a Force skill to another Force-sensitive character. What if the ranks given put the target character's skill ranks beyond his maximum? Would the added ranks do nothing?

A: *The Dark Side Sourcebook* could be a bit clearer in this regard. The Sith Master ability is meant to grant skill ranks in a Force skill that the recipient *hasn't* maxed out, up to the total ranks the Sith Lord possesses. So, for example, an 8th-level Force adept with only 5 ranks in Force Lightning could receive 6 more ranks from a 10th-level Sith Lord (assuming, of course, that the Sith Lord had that many ranks to give).

Q: I heard a rumor that the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Lightsaber) had been changed so that lightsaber variations -- such as wrist sabers, great sabers, light daggers, and so forth -- no longer require individual Exotic Weapon Proficiency feats to use them properly. The rumor said that this rule change was made on the Wizards of the Coast website, but I can't find anything online to back it up. Can you shed some light on the subject?

A: Sure -- there's no such ruling. You might be thinking of a recent rules clarification posted in Jedi Counseling #33. In that column, I pointed out that, while variant lightsabers require additional proficiencies to wield, the only penalty for not having the proper Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat is the -4 non-proficiency penalty.

Q: When I throw a spear, which attack bonus must I use: the melee attack bonus or the ranged attack bonus?

A: You would use the ranged attack bonus, but your Strength modifier applies to the damage, because it's a thrown weapon.

Q: Another player and I are having a disagreement about Sith poison, which is mentioned in *The Dark Side Sourcebook*. He's under the impression that each time you fail the Will save to use a Force Point, you take the 1d6 Constitution damage. I believe that his interpretation is wrong. Please clarify, once and for all, the consequences for failing the Will saves to call on the Force.

A: When a character is first exposed to the poison, he has to make a Will saving throw, and if he fails, he suffers 1d6 Constitution damage. This is the only time that the Sith poison damages the character. Thereafter, whenever he attempts to use a Force Point (and doesn't call on the dark side), he has to make another Will saving throw, although failure doesn't mean taking more damage. Failing these subsequent Will saves merely means that the character calls on the dark side (and thus gains a Dark Side Point).

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](http://www.thegamemechanics.com) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*. (Download them for free at www.thegamemechanics.com.)

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Jedi Counseling 44: Grapplin'

[JD Wiker](#)

Are telepath abilities Force skills? Can flat-footed characters take attacks of opportunity? Is grappling as imbalanced as it seems? And if a Jedi does evil in the name of good, does that make him evil? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



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Q: When I'm grappling, I always need to make an opposed grapple check to accomplish something. If I have multiple attacks due to a high base attack and my foe does not, my grapple check is successively less likely to succeed. What happens to my foe's opposing check? Does it degrade? What if he has only one attack? What if multiple grapplers are involved?

A: You always get to use your full grapple check when a foe who is grappling you uses the Damage Your Opponent or Pin tactics against you, regardless of how many times in the round you've already been called upon to make opposed grapple checks.

Q: If my foe's opposed check modifier does not degrade, but mine does, how is that fair?



A: It's fair because usually, there isn't a negative consequence to failing one of those subsequent grapple checks. You either succeed or you don't, but the foe doesn't get away or damage *you*. In each of the examples you describe above, the advantage goes to the character (or characters) with the most attacks per round, even though the advantage dwindles after multiple tries in that round.

Q: Can I get more grappling attacks by using Two-Weapon Fighting (unarmed, of course) or by having multiple arms?

A: Yes, in the same way that you can get more unarmed attacks by using Two-Weapon Fighting or by having multiple arms.

Q: Can the class abilities of the telepath prestige class be retried? It seems to me that you should be able to retry most of them, but I'm not so certain about Mind Probe and Psychic Avatar.

A: Thought Sensor can be retried, which is stated fairly clearly. Mind Shard, Thought Bomb, Neural Storm, and Psychic Scourge can be retried because they're forms of attack.

Obviously, telepath class abilities that don't require checks, such as Psychic Citadel and Receptacle, don't fall into the "retry or not retry" question. This actually includes Psychic Avatar, as well; it requires no check to manifest a mental image with this ability.

Mind Probe, however, isn't as clear. However, since the text doesn't state that it cannot be attempted multiple times, it's safe to assume that it can.

Q: Are telepath class abilities considered Force skills? That is, can I use Force techniques like Maximize or Split on them?

A: Although they use the Force in some fashion -- and Force Defense applies to those that allow saving throws -- they are not considered Force skills, so the Force techniques do not apply to them.

Q: Can Affect Mind be used if I can't see the target but I *can* sense it through the telepath ability Thought Sensor? I would think so, because I can speak to the target through Telepathy and "see" it.

A: Remember that Thought Sensor doesn't tell a telepath the exact location of a living being, only whether or not the being is within the telepath's sensing distance. This isn't precise enough to allow targeting the living being with a skill like Affect Mind.

Q: If I have multiple attacks of opportunity (due to the Combat Reflexes feat), are they all made at my highest base attack bonus, or do they degrade in accuracy as normal attacks do?

A: An attack of opportunity is *always* made at your highest attack bonus (for the weapon you're using), regardless of how many attacks of opportunity (or regular attacks) you've taken during the round.

Q: Suppose I'm in combat, and I get the drop on my opponent, acting in the surprise round. I want to disarm my target, which normally provokes an attack of opportunity. Does my target get to make the attack of opportunity? I'm under the impression that a surprised character can't act. But I believe that attacks of opportunity are reactions, not actions. Can a flat-footed character react?

A: Well, the real question here is: Can a flat-footed character make attacks of opportunity? And although the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook isn't entirely clear about it, the rule is the same as for *Dungeons & Dragons*: No, a flat-footed character can't make attacks of opportunity. It's not really a question of whether an attack of opportunity is an action or a reaction. ("Reaction" really describes skill checks, rather than attacks.)

Q: I've noticed that the rules for Force Point accumulation for dark side characters is a bit limited when it comes to higher-level characters. Specifically, in my campaign (which is set in the Sith Empire), my characters are running out of Force Points. Do you have any suggestions on ways to award Force Points that fit the theme of the campaign?

A: Actually, that's the intent of the rule: The longer you draw upon the dark side, the greater its toll upon you, and part of that toll is that you eventually start running out of Force Points. In the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*, evil has a price.

Still, if you find that a lack of Force Points is keeping your players from pillaging, looting, murdering, and engaging in other Sith-style mayhem, you might consider taking a cue from the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* Action Point rules. Each time the characters advance a level, give them an amount of Force Points equal to half their character level. Obviously, you don't want to use the "6 + half character's level" system; considering that

Force Points roll considerably more dice than *d20 Modern's* Action Points, the potential for game imbalance is high.

Q: Please clarify the core rulebook's statement that, when gaining a Force Point, a tainted character instead reduces his Dark Side Point total by one. Does this mean that a tainted character may not gain Force Points (except when advancing a level), or does it mean a tainted character can choose to lose a Dark Side Point *instead of* gaining a Force Point?

A: It means the latter. The sacrifice of a Force Point to lose a Dark Side Point is a choice; it's not automatic.

Q: When a ship is ionized, does it stop because the engines stop working? In an earlier installment of Jedi Counseling, you stated: "Realistically, yes, it would keep moving." But that isn't really in line with the rules, is it?

In the real world, engines represent acceleration. In *Star Wars*, engines represent speed. If you lose your acceleration, you retain your speed, but if you lose your speed, you won't move.

Do you stand by the old ruling, or will you issue a new one? If you stand by it, then ion engines are used only to start moving and to maneuver, and not for actual movement.

A: You're trying to draw conclusions based on a question about how *Star Wars* physics relate to real-world physics, and that's never an easy proposition. I suppose I could have been more detailed in my answer, but I figured that the context of the question would make it obvious. A ship disabled by ion damage should not stop dead in the square it occupied at the time. Instead, it travels forward a few squares. Realistically, that's accurate. So, if you're looking to apply a bit more real-world physics in your game, use that rule.

But if you're just trying to apply the rules as they're written, then no, the ship doesn't move at all, because the rules for ion damage states "the ship cannot move."

My answer to the question in Jedi Counseling 26 was meant to be advice to someone who wanted more realism, not a change to the rulebook. Sorry for not making that more clear.

Q: *Starships of the Galaxy* provides rules regarding the size of the target that ion weapons can affect. (An ion cannon can only affect ships of the class it was designed for or smaller). Is that rule still in effect now that ion cannons do dice damage? I believe that the revised core rulebook supersedes the old rules in *Starships of the Galaxy*, but the forum is divided on this.

A: The revised core rulebook rules on ion cannons do indeed supersede the ion cannon rules in *Starships of the Galaxy*. There is no longer a size restriction.

Q: In my campaign, one of the heroes tortured an enemy soldier for information. I know that torture is cruel and normally awards a Dark Side Point. But the hero had no other way to learn the details of a plan that would have killed millions if it had been allowed to proceed. Should I still give the hero a Dark Side Point?

A: That's the classic approach for getting someone to do something evil: make him think it's his only option. Just because the hero couldn't come up with a better plan doesn't mean there was no other way to learn the information. I mean, think about it: If someone won't tell you something you want to know, do *you* torture them?

Yes, the hero definitely should get a Dark Side Point.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star*

Wars titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](http://www.thegamemechanics.com) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*. (Download them for free at www.thegamemechanics.com.)

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Jedi Counseling 45: Affect Mind

[JD Wiker](#)

How much downtime should a GM allow between adventures? Does Ambidexterity stack with Multidexterity? Just how well do Shi'ido imitate humanoid species? And can you use Affect Mind through a ship's hull or over a transceiver? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



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Q: I was running a game the other day and we had a problem. The heroes were leaving an Imperial installation, and a TIE Fighter pulled up alongside them and ordered them to return to the docking bay. Well, obviously, they didn't want to go back -- especially with a TIE Fighter escort. So one of the Jedi heroes used the ship's transceiver to talk to the enemy pilot. Since he figured they were flying past each other, like the Cloud Car escort in *The Empire Strikes Back*, the TIE would be close, perhaps even within the 10-meter range of Affect Mind. Since he could talk to the pilot via the transceiver, that meant communication was possible as well.

That seems kind of powerful to me. Does the communication for Affect Mind have to be person-to-person rather than over a system? One of the arguments was that Obi-Wan used it in *A New Hope* to affect the stormtroopers, so a person didn't have to actually "see" the target to do it; the TIE Fighter was simply like a large suit of armor. So the question is: Does Affect Mind work through a ship's hull, and does it work over a radio?

A: Well, yes and no, but more no than yes. Affect Mind *would* work through a ship's hull, provided the Force-user could see (or otherwise sense) the target, and the target was within 10 meters. But the argument that Obi-Wan Kenobi couldn't actually "see" the stormtroopers in Episode IV is a bit specious; it doesn't matter whether you can see the person's *flesh* or not.

However, what you're really looking at here is the question of how close the TIE fighter would get to the heroes' ship, and the answer should have been "not that close." This isn't a police car pulling up alongside a speeding car and flagging the driver down. It's not even an airplane flying close enough to another plane so that the pilots can communicate via hand signals. Flying that close looks good in the movies, but it's dangerous. That's even true in the game, where two ships occupying the same square have to make avoid hazard checks to prevent a collision.

Q: I have a player with the Force Light skill who thinks he can get away with doing all sorts of things that should earn a Dark Side Point. He figures he can simply erase every Dark Side Point just by spending a bit of vitality, even if he keeps making the saving throw. That takes the sting out of the dark side, doesn't it?

A: That's one of the rule loopholes that I wish I'd patched a bit more when I wrote that skill. The text for the skill should point out that this "sin and repent" system shouldn't work more than once. If the target uses Force Light as a cheap way of getting rid of his own Dark Side Points, he's using it with evil intent (since he just wants to go out and commit more evil acts). Not only should he retain his Dark Side Point, he should get another for warping the Force that way.

Q: Can a character with multiple limbs take the Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting feats, in addition to the Multidexterity and Multiweapon Fighting feats?

A: No. Multidexterity and Multiweapon Fighting replace the Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting feats for such characters.

Q: What about Improved Two-Weapon Fighting?

A: I'd allow it, with the understanding that it's really "Improved Multiweapon Fighting" (and thus requires Multidexterity and Multiweapon Fighting, rather than Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting), and that it allows

only one extra attack, not one extra attack per off-hand limb.

Q: I was reading the *Ultimate Alien Anthology* and noticed that none of the species have statistics for regenerative abilities. I know that Trandoshans, for one, do have that ability. Was that overlooked, or not allowed, or what?

A: It falls into the "or what" category. First, the regenerative abilities of Trandoshans is extremely slow, compared to, say, the regeneration ability of trolls from *Dungeons & Dragons* -- something on the order of weeks or months, rather than rounds or even days. Second, the only rules for losing limbs are optional rules found in the *Galactic Campaign Guide*, not the revised core rulebook. Since Wizards of the Coast didn't want to require you to own the *Galactic Campaign Guide* in order to use the *Ultimate Alien Anthology* (or even to use the revised core rulebook), rules for regenerating severed limbs don't appear in the rules for Trandoshans in either the *Ultimate Alien Anthology* or the core rulebook.

Q: If an individual is moved with Move Object through threatened squares, do opponents get to make attacks of opportunity on that person?

A: In Jedi Counseling #22, I ruled that a character who is bantha rushed into a threatened square is treated as though he had moved into the square voluntarily. I'd say the same logic applies here, so yes, he'd be subject to attacks of opportunity.

Q: You've previously answered a number of questions about the Shi'ido species, but now that I've got a player in my campaign with a Shi'ido character, more questions are coming up. When shapeshifting, is the Shi'ido's Disguise check subject to the normal Disguise penalties? That is, when shifting into a different species (which seems like something Shi'ido would do most of the time), do you take a -2 to -6 penalty on your Disguise check?

A: Yes. The Disguise skill includes passing yourself off as someone who's been a member of that species all your life, and is therefore comfortable in that skin. For example, if you were able to disguise yourself as a dog, would you remember to wag your tail, lower your ears, and so on? So, a penalty is appropriate. But considering that we're talking about a species that can shift only to humanoid forms, the penalty should never get much worse than -2, and never more than -4, in any case.

Q: Can a Shi'ido shift into a specific person? If a Shi'ido met Luke Skywalker, could he then change into a nearly flawless match of Luke (assuming a good Disguise check)?

A: With a sufficiently high Disguise check, yes. But with the shapeshifting ability alone, no. So, a Shi'ido could shift into the form of a blond-brown-haired Human of the appropriate size, build, and age, but people would mistake the Shi'ido for Luke only if they had a description of Luke Skywalker but had never seen his face or observed his mannerisms.

Q: Does the picture of the Shi'ido in the *Ultimate Alien Anthology* show it in its natural form? I ask because the illustration really doesn't match the physical description given in the entry.

A: I believe the illustrator was trying to convey the Shi'ido's shapeshifting ability, rather than its natural, unshifted form. Go with the description.

Q: Is Echani Expertise only useable by characters who are allowed an extra action during their turn, such as the kind granted by the Heroic Surge feat?



A: No. The idea is that you pin the target in one round, and then in the next round -- as a full-round action -- you bust him up with Echani Expertise. (Obviously, the wording implies otherwise, but that was the designer's intent.)

Q: I have a question about downtime between adventures. Should time pass between missions? If so, how much? And should I allow the players to use their Profession skills to make money during that time?

A: I keep the time very minimal, myself, precisely because I don't want the players starting their *own* adventures and getting off the hero track. Your question, though, is really one of GMing advice, and my advice is this: A player can always argue that the rules "let" him do something that's disruptive to the game -- such as using his Gamble skill every spare minute of his downtime to amass a small fortune -- but your job as GM is to ensure that the players don't turn the campaign into a series of die rolls with no story in between. How you go about doing that is up to you, and that could include keeping the heroes too busy to do anything but be heroes, having various gambling establishments ban them, or whatever.

In the end, my advice goes back to a basic premise of GMing: It's not a contest between you and your players, nor a battle of wits in which you and the players try to outsmart each other on how to abuse the system (or how to stop players from doing so). If it gets to that point, it's time to explain to the player that he's taking the fun out of the game for everyone else.

About the Author

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Jedi Counseling 46: Droid Jedi?

[JD Wiker](#)

Does an Ewok have to be primitive? Why can't droids use the Force? Shouldn't characters who go into negative wounds suffer ability damage? And can a Clawdite take on the form of a Twi'lek and communicate via *lekku*? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



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Q: In the *Hero's Guide*, some Force feats (such as Dark Power and Kinetic Might) have no prerequisites listed. But almost every Force feat has at least one of the primary feats (Alter, Sense, Control, or Force-Sensitive) as a prerequisite -- at least in the revised core rulebook and the *Ultimate Alien Anthology*. Is this a mistake? If so, what are the prerequisites for each Force feat in the *Hero's Guide*?

A: It's not a mistake. These feats have what are known as "hidden prerequisites." Taking the feats gives you aptitude bonuses on certain combinations of Force skills, and, obviously, if you don't have those skills, the feats do nothing for you (unless, of course, the skill in question can be used untrained). So, by extension, the feats necessary to take the skills are "required" to make these *Hero's Guide* feats useful.

Q: According to the core rulebook, droids do not gain Force Points, nor can they become Force-sensitive and take Force classes. But in *The Empire Strikes Back*, Yoda states that the Force is in everything ("all around you, the tree, the rock") and that "life creates it, makes it grow." Thus, things that live increase the Force, and Jedi can touch the Force but can use far more than they're creating. Even dead Jedi can still touch the Force as spirits. Also, inanimate objects (droids, rocks, Luke's X-wing) don't create Force energy but are still part of it.

I understand why skills like Heal Another wouldn't work on droids, since the Force couldn't repair the mechanical damage, but why can't droids take Force classes or feats? One of my players wants to create a Jedi droid, and I'd like to give him a better reason that he can't than just "because the rules say so."

A: Well, first, no matter what the rules say, it's *your* decision. It's your campaign, after all, and if you don't have a problem with letting your player have a droid Jedi, then let him have a droid Jedi.

But here's the simple reason why the rules don't allow it: Only living things can feel the Force, and only things that can feel the Force can manipulate it. This isn't a rule of the game -- it's a rule of the *Star Wars* setting. If you want a more concrete explanation, something expressed in the scientific terms put forth in the movies, then you can turn to midi-chlorians. Midi-chlorians are living organisms that symbiotically inhabit other living organisms. They don't exist in droids or rocks (though they do exist in trees), but someone with a sufficiently high number of them -- a Jedi, for example -- can use his connection with them to feel and move things like droids and rocks.

Q: In the *Ultimate Alien Anthology*, it states that when the Shi'ido and Clawdite shapeshift, they gain none of the species traits or special qualities of the new form. But if either of these shapeshifters were to take on the form of a Twi'lek and could understand the *lekku* "head-tail" language, would they be able to speak it using their newly formed head-tails?

A: That certainly seems reasonable for a Shi'ido, though I wouldn't allow it for a Clawdite (see below).

Q: If a Shi'ido or Clawdite shifted into a form with unusual vocal chords, such as a Wookiee, would they be unable to speak Basic? And in a related question, would they be able to speak the Wookiee language of Shyriiwook (assuming they understood it)?

A: Using the same logic, yes and yes.

Q: The *Ultimate Alien Anthology* says that Clawdites can't shift into the form of an Ithorian. Could they shift into the form of a Twi'lek, or do the head-tails prove too much of a challenge for their shapeshifting abilities?

A: The head-tails are too much of a challenge for a Clawdite, given that a Clawdite can't generate the extra flesh to simulate them. One *could* argue that a Clawdite should be able to transfer flesh from a different area of its body to make this trick work, but that's a slippery slope, logically. If that were possible, then players of Clawdite characters would always claim to be shifting into the forms of smaller humanoids, and shifting the excess flesh into the desired area -- and that's just a big headache for the GM. It's better just to say that Clawdites simply can't do it, and leave it at that.

Q: A hero in my group went into negative wounds (–8 or thereabouts) after a particularly nasty pirate turned a flamethrower on her. I ruled that the near-death burning caused permanent ability damage. For the time being, the player is happy to run the character that way, but she's asked if her hero could some day recover the stat damage from burning.

Would being set on fire and going into negative wounds cause ability damage, and if so, should it be permanent or temporary? Does Heal Another work on stat damage, even after a year and a day? How about using bacta?

A: Going into negative wounds doesn't cause ability score damage (aside from being fatigued, which lowers the character's Strength and Dexterity). While assigning ability score damage based on going into negative wounds might be realistic -- healing from near-death experiences isn't easy, by any means -- the game doesn't apply that level of realism. That would be applying a long-term penalty to a character just for suffering damage, which really isn't fair to the player.

Q: In the revised core rulebook, it states that characters get additional languages based on their Intelligence modifier. Are these complete "Read/Write" and "Speak," or are these points that can be allocated to the skills Read/Write Language or Speak Language on an individual basis like skill points? For example, does a character with an Intelligence of 13 (+1 bonus) get to take Speak Zabrak and Read/Write Zabrak, or only one of them? Can a character with two species languages (Ryl and Basic for the Twi'leks) Speak and Read/Write both?

A: Additional languages grant a character his choice of either Speak (language) or Read/Write (language), but not both. It works like the choice to spend skill points on either of those skills. However, they aren't actually skill points; you can't allocate them to other skills if you don't want to take the languages.

Q: I know that a droid can increase its Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma every 4th level. Can a droid also increase these abilities through programming or by purchasing special equipment? I can't find any rules regarding this.

A: A droid can increase these ability scores only through the ability increase mechanic, mainly because there just aren't any pieces of droid equipment that increase them.

Q: The rulebook is unclear about the primitive limitation of Ewoks. Would an Ewok who was raised by Humans be capable of using modern technology without the penalty? Is it a mental inability to learn technology, or just a cultural limitation?

A: It's a cultural limitation. Ewoks are primitive because they're raised in a culture that doesn't have advanced technology. An Ewok raised in a society where he has access to advanced technology would, therefore, not be primitive. The character would get the usual Weapon Group Proficiencies for his starting class, rather than primitive weapons and simple weapons (as the Ewok species write-up suggests).

But if a player asks to create a technologically proficient Ewok character, be wary of his motivations. If he's just looking for a way to get around the drawbacks of the species, you should think twice about allowing him to play an Ewok. He might want a hero with the appearance and personality he wants to roleplay, but without the

disadvantages normally associated with it. If you're going to allow such things, then you might as well allow Humans with Wookiee Rage, Kel Dor that can breathe oxygen, and Gamorreans with Intelligence scores of 18.

There's nothing inherently wrong with these ideas. For example, the character of "Piggy" in the *X-Wing* novel series is quite a clever concept. But as a GM, you have to be aware of the ramifications of allowing characters who don't have the usual drawbacks of their species.

Q: In one of my *Star Wars* games, a Jedi hero came upon a character in cortosis armor. When the Jedi attacked, I ruled that he could make only one attack per round because the cortosis deactivated his lightsaber. But he argued that he could reactivate his lightsaber between attacks as a free action. I didn't know you could do that during a full-round action; I thought you could only do it before or after. Doesn't this make cortosis armor somewhat useless? Or was the player incorrect?

A: He was incorrect; apparently, he missed the ruling we made on this subject back in *Star Wars Gamer* #8: "Reactivating the lightsaber is a free action -- if the Jedi thinks to do so -- but that action can't be taken in the midst of a full attack action, so no taking the first attack, reactivating the saber, taking the second attack, reactivating the saber, and so on."

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](http://www.thegamemechanics.com) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*. (Download them for free at www.thegamemechanics.com.)

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Jedi Counseling 47: Clone Cost

[JD Wiker](#)

Can a player choose what his character sees with Farseeing? What happened to synergy bonuses? Does Comprehend Speech work on *Iekku*? And how much does it cost to buy a clone? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: Jedi jumps and falls are covered in the [Hero's Guide](#), but I've also seen an FAQ that says when a Jedi spends 4 vitality, he adds his ranks of Move Object and then multiplies the distance by three. The *Hero's Guide* adds the ranks but *doesn't* multiply by three. Which is right?

A: Actually, the FAQ is. After the *Hero's Guide* came out, a discussion occurred on some of the message boards about whether or not the Force jump rules accurately reflected what we saw in *The Phantom Menace* and *Attack of the Clones* -- and the consensus was, they didn't. So we talked it out, and we decided that the best solution was to determine the jump distance with the roll, and then multiply that distance by three. I think you'll find it works out fairly well.

Q: I have a player who has mentioned wanting to purchase a slave, though that idea has passed. But it did bring up the question of exactly how much a slave would cost. In *Tales from Jabba's Palace*, it was stated that Jabba paid quite a large sum for Oola and her companion. How much is a large amount? Would cost be modified based upon training (levels and skills), in both the case of a clone and a slave?

A: My opinion is that, while knowing such a figure might be mildly important for the occasional scenario, slavery is too distasteful a subject for the official rules. If you want to work up prices and rules for your own campaign, that's up to you. It seems like you're on the right track with your idea about basing it on levels and skills, though.

Q: Along similar lines, I have a player interested in making a clone. I don't have a problem with it yet, except for the cost. How much does it cost to have, say, the Kaminoans make a customized clone, either a duplicate or a modified being? Is there a base price to consider, or should I just make up a really big number?

A: This is a case where I think that official rules *are* needed -- they just haven't been written yet. Until they are, though, consider that clones should be more expensive than slaves (since, otherwise, people would just buy clones to be their slaves). Carrying that logic a bit further, slaves should be more expensive than droids (except in Hutt Space, where slaves are apparently easier to get).

Now, given that logic, perhaps the easiest way to sort out the comparative costs of droids, slaves, and clones is to assume that a slave costs twice as much as a droid with the same general skills and levels, and a clone costs twice as much as that. So, the easiest way to judge the cost of a clone is to price it at four times the cost of a comparable droid.



Q: My question concerns two-weapon fighting. The rules say that you get an extra attack and that if you have the Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting feats, along with a light weapon in your off-hand, all your attacks suffer a -2 penalty. Is this extra attack that you get (supposedly at your full base attack bonus) effectively then at -2?

A: That's correct.

Q: And with Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, you get another attack at -5, so does the -2 from the first extra attack stack with that?

A: Yes. Your first two attacks are at -2, and your second two attacks are at -7.

Q: Here's a situation that came up in my game the other night. My character is standing in a hallway, knowing that an enemy is waiting around the corner. But the enemy knows my position, too. My character leans around the corner and opens fire, with one-half cover. On my opponent's turn, he returns fire.

My question is: Do I take a penalty on my attack, perhaps because I can't handle my blaster correctly? Does my opponent get a bonus to his Defense? Or is there no real effect on my attack or my foe's attack, except that my character gets the +4 bonus to Defense and the +2 bonus to his Reflex saves?

A: Using cover doesn't have an effect on your attack rolls, but if your opponent is *also* considered to have cover - which, in this case, it sounds like he does -- he gets the same bonuses to Defense and Reflex saves that your character gets. In essence, you're both "fighting from around a corner," so you both get the same benefit. If your opponent were farther away (and thus, not able to take advantage of the cover), he wouldn't get the bonus, but you would.

Q: Is it possible to use a Force adept's "Comprehend Speech" ability to understand *lekku*, the "head-tail" language of the Twi'leks?

A: No. Comprehend Speech specifically states that it applies to spoken languages, and *lekku* is not a spoken language. It's more akin to sign language.

Q: What kind of damage is taken when a character is swallowed whole by, let's say, a greater krayt dragon? Is it vitality or wound damage?

A: It's normal damage, so it would apply to vitality first, then wounds (when vitality runs out). It would certainly make sense to state that it's wound damage, though, if you wanted to use that as a house rule. Just keep in mind that it's liable to be a bit more lethal to the characters in the campaign.

Q: Taking a look at Darth Vader's Force feats, I don't see Dissipate Energy on the list. I think that's pretty strange, considering that Vader managed to stop Solo's blaster fire in *The Empire Strikes Back* when they met in Cloud City. Is this errata?

A: This is a question we've discussed before, but it's worth mentioning again for players who might have come to the game more recently. When we were redesigning the Deflect Blasters feat to be a Jedi class ability, we took a hard look at the differences between Deflect Blasters and Dissipate Energy, and realized that the only example we had of Dissipate Energy in the movies was, apparently, the scene you're describing.

So we watched the scene again a few times and read the novelization, and we concluded that Vader hadn't absorbed the shots, he'd deflected them with his armored hand. (If you watch the widescreen version, you can see scorch marks on the wall near Vader afterward, indicating that the shots bounced off his hand. And in the novelization, it says: ". . . the Dark Lord had lifted a gauntlet-protected hand and effortlessly deflected them so they exploded against the wall in a harmless spray of flying white shards.")



Q: For professions that require the use of Intelligence-based skills, would having those skills provide a synergy bonus? For example, if I have a Duros character with a high Intelligence, Craft (droids), Repair, and Computer Use, would he get a synergy bonus on Profession (droid mechanic)?

A: Something that seems to have escaped the notice of a lot of players when we released the revised core rulebook is that synergy bonuses are no longer codified; they're entirely in the hands of the Gamemaster. And they're decided on a case-by-case basis, rather than always applying (as they did before). The bonus is still just +2, however.

So, it's up to your GM to decide whether the situation warrants a potential synergy bonus, and from which skill (or skills).

Q: If you build a droid yourself, is it preprogrammed with the standard feats and skills when you complete it?

A: That's the assumption, yes. You install the appropriate software as part of the construction process. Note that you don't actually have to have the skills and feats involved -- or even the Computer Use skill. (It's not as though you have to write the software yourself, after all.)

Q: Jedi have been known to use their special abilities to recall memories in extreme detail. I have a player who wants to use that ability, but he claims it's not the same as Farseeing into the past. Should there be a new skill for this, or does Farseeing cover it?

A: Farseeing is meant to cover it. Part of the design philosophy for the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* was to avoid creating three separate skills when one would do. You could split hairs about how recalling something that you did an hour ago doesn't use the same mental processes (or access the Force in the same way) as seeing what happened a hundred years before you were born, but for the sake of keeping the game streamlined, it *is* the same sort of thing. If your player's complaint is that he doesn't want to put a lot of ranks into Farseeing to be able to do this, you could always lower the DC (say, from 20 down to 10) for events that the character personally participated in. If he's concerned about the length of time for the check, you could always lower that to "the length of time of the event you wish to mentally replay," using the same logic.

Q: On that same note, what are the extents of Farseeing? How much information can you see, and can you choose what you view or does the Force choose it for you? That is, can a player choose to see something, or does the player merely get a vision that the GM thinks is appropriate?

A: The player can always specify what it is he wants to try to see (and should do so, before making the roll). But on those occasions when the GM wants to give the hero an important piece of information via Farseeing, the GM should choose what the player sees.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](http://www.thegamemechanics.com) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*. (Download them for free at www.thegamemechanics.com.)

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Jedi Counseling 48: Dark Side Points 2

[JD Wiker](#)

Can a hero use Bluff to feint in ranged combat? When do grenades detonate? Do heroes benefit from a ship's crew rating? And is stealing a speeder evil enough to earn you Dark Side Points? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: I play a Zeison Sha warrior (from the *Hero's Guide*), and he's reached 3rd level in that prestige class. Now he has the ability to make a Force skill cost less vitality, and from the choices listed, I selected Force Strike. Reducing the cost to 1 made it much cheaper to use, since I have also started to use the Empower and Maximize Force techniques. Unfortunately, this has raised a question as to the actual vitality cost of this power -- or, rather, when to apply the vitality point reduction.

I calculated it as follows. Force Strike costs 2 vitality, reduced to 1 for the Zeison Sha's "Second Nature" ability, then multiplied by 6 for the two Force techniques, bringing the total up to 6 vitality points.

But my GM reasoned that I had to apply the vitality point discount on the total vitality as calculated *after* the Force techniques had been applied. So 2 vitality for Force Strike, multiplied by 6 for the two Force techniques, and then subtract 1 for Second Nature, for a total of 11 vitality.

Which method is correct?

A: Actually, your GM's method is correct. Second Nature allows you to subtract 1 from the total, not from the base cost. It's just that the total and the base cost are usually the same thing.

Q: In a recent game, our heroes were hidden in a place where a lot of doctors and scientists were moving around in the background. In order to get by, our characters abducted two scientists. With blasters in their faces, we kept them quiet, and then we exchanged clothing so we could move about among the others. But we knew that the captured scientists would alert everyone if we just left them there. So we elected to stun them into unconsciousness. We set our blasters to stun and fired inside their mouths (to help muffle the shots). The GM ruled that the stun blasts in their mouths killed the scientists, and he awarded us Dark Side Points. Was his ruling correct -- would a stun blast like that really kill?

A: There are no rules for stun having different effects (including potentially fatal effects) based on where the stun bolt is aimed. So you shouldn't have gotten Dark Side Points for killing the scientists, because your stun blasts shouldn't have killed them.

On the other hand, sticking a blaster -- even one set on stun -- in someone's mouth to "muffle the shot" falls into the category of unnecessary cruelty. And *that's* very likely to earn you a Dark Side Point.

Q: In "[Jedi Counseling 15: Dark Side Points](#)," you said that Dark Side Points can't be spent the way that Force Points can. So, to me, that means that if a character uses all of her Force Points for Dark Side skills to commit evil acts, bringing her down to zero Force Points, she can't call on the Force again until she gains another Force Point. Is that correct?

A: Yes. Some folks seem to have a hard time wrapping their minds around the concept, but using the Dark Side is not supposed to be a wise idea. It gives you more power now, but at the cost of much less power later.

Q: A hero who is not Force-sensitive can have a maximum of only 5 Force Points. However, if she committed an evil act, could she gain more than 5 Dark Side Points?

A: Yes.

Q: As a GM, can I award Dark Side Points to characters for acts that go against the "common morality," or do the acts have to be outright evil? The reason I ask is that in my campaign, the characters rented some speeders, and after their mission, they drove the speeders into the cargo bay of their ship and took off. That's stealing, but in my mind, it's not evil. However, all of the characters willingly participated this. I'm not sure whether they should get Dark Side Points or not.

A: It's really up to you and how strict you want to be with the heroes. That hinges, more or less, on how much you want the possibility of falling to the dark side to be a part of your game. If you want to keep the characters pure of heart -- or have them fall to the dark side quickly -- then award them Dark Side Points for any behavior that's morally questionable. But if you don't want the lure of the dark side to be a big factor in your campaign, feel free to overlook such minor transgressions.

But consider, as well, that *who* they steal from is as important as *whether* they steal. Is it an evil act, or even a morally questionable act, to steal a speeder from someone who tries to kill you? On the other hand, is it an evil act to steal a speeder from someone who has never done you any harm, and who has provided you with a speeder in good faith, with the understanding that you would return it later?

These distinctions are important. You don't want your players to be confused by an apparent double standard when you have a clear idea in your head of which deed qualifies as evil and which qualifies as "necessary." Just make sure you communicate the distinction to your players -- preferably *before* you award them the Dark Side Points.

Q: When does a grenade detonate? My GM insists that grenades detonate after his villains get a chance to throw them back -- or that it requires 2 rounds (one to activate the grenade, and another to throw it). Is this ruling correct?

A: No, it's not correct, though he may be confusing the rule for thermal detonators with the rules for frag and stun grenades. Both frag and stun grenades state, in their descriptions: "It is designed to explode on contact." Thermal detonators, on the other hand, specifically state that the timer can be set for up to a 3-round delay.

Obviously, it's your GM's call to make a house rule that all grenades function like thermal detonators, but it's his responsibility to make it clear that such a rule is in effect.

Q: Is the crew rating for ships just for GM-controlled ships, or should heroes take this into account also?

A: The crew rating of a starship isn't a bonus applied to the heroes' rolls. It's there for the GM, either for ships controlled by the GM, or for systems on the heroes' ships that aren't controlled by the heroes themselves (if any).

Q: Our GM is somewhat unfamiliar with alien species as player characters. Also, any error or deficiency in the editing, however minor, can be easily magnified by inexperience. I've noticed that some species have special abilities or feats that seem to relate to them directly as a species. I created an Ubese character, but in the absence of adequate documentation and him differentiating perhaps too much from the quick-generated characters and the PC variety, my GM considers my Ubese hero to be little more than a normal Human with different coloration.

As a result, the GM hasn't given my character any Survival bonus, which I thought should be free for the species, no stat modifications for the plus or minus, and I had to take Armor Proficiency (light) as my one 1st-level fringer feat. I would have thought that should be free even if the Ubese hero didn't get Gearhead as a starting feat. Can you advise?



A: I have to admit that I'm really confused by this question. You're describing all of the bonuses that an Ubese character gets, according to its entry in the *Ultimate Alien Anthology*, but you're also telling me that your GM isn't allowing your hero to have those bonuses. I can only assume that you don't actually *have* a copy of the *Ultimate Alien Anthology*, and you're just basing your hero's statistics off an Ubese NPC.

So, my advice would be: Pick up a copy of the *Ultimate Alien Anthology*. The official rules for Ubese -- assuming your GM wants to use the official rules for Ubese -- are on pages 172–174 of that book.

Q: I was reading an old "Jedi Counseling" column in which someone asked if you could crush an opponent with Move Object. You said no, because that would be more like Force Grip. But could you use Move Object to cause an opponent's vital organ -- like his heart, for instance -- to move by itself?

A: Well, no, that's even *more* Force Grip, which states: "You can use the Force to . . . grip an organ or crush a larynx."

Q: Can you use feint only during melee combat, or can you use it in ranged combat as well, as long as you're in range to interact with the target in order to use the Bluff skill? I can't find anything in the rules to specify that feint is only for melee combat.

A: Feinting in combat indeed doesn't specify that it's only for melee combat -- at least, not in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*. However, *Dungeons & Dragons* does make that distinction, stating: "You can also use Bluff to mislead an opponent in *melee* combat." (My emphasis.) So, my ruling would be that the word "melee" was accidentally omitted from the Bluff rules for feinting in combat, and thus it does not apply with ranged attacks.

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the **Alternity** line, including the **Dark*Matter** campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The New Jedi Order Sourcebook*, the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also working as president of [The Game Mechanics](http://www.thegamemechanics.com) a d20 design studio-winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*. (Download them for free at www.thegamemechanics.com.)

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Jedi Counseling 49: Hit Me!

[JD Wiker](#)

Why doesn't cortosis weave stop *all* the damage from a lightsaber? How does scale affect combat between starships and characters? Can a character who *wants* to be hit voluntarily lower his Defense? And what species is Darth Maul, anyway? Designer JD Wiker answers these [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#) questions and more in the latest installment of "Jedi Counseling."



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Q: How does the scale system work in the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game*? How would you figure the modifier, for example, if a character wanted to shoot a starfighter with a blaster pistol, or if a TIE fighter wanted to shoot a character on the ground?

A: Assuming you're talking about attack roll modifiers, all of that is spelled out on page 211 of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* revised core rulebook. To answer your specific questions: The character with the blaster pistol gets a +12 bonus to hit the TIE fighter, and that same character would have a +12 bonus to his Defense against an attack from the TIE fighter. (Of course, range figures into this sort of thing as well, so the TIE fighter's superior range means that it can hit the character on the ground while remaining well outside the range of the character's blaster pistol.)



However, there are no damage modifiers. A blaster pistol deals just as much damage to a starfighter as it deals to a stormtrooper, and a TIE fighter deals just as much damage to a Sullustan as it deals to an X-wing.

Q: In the game I'm running at the moment, a character with the Force-Sensitive feat triggered a trap that fired an "orb of dark force energy" at him. As it came at him from behind, I ruled that he was flat-footed for the purposes of the orb hitting him. He said that because he was Force-sensitive, he should get a roll to keep his Dexterity bonus to his Defense. I disagreed, as the trap didn't initiate combat and wasn't an opponent. Which of us is correct?

A: He is -- mostly. First, with the d20 System, there's no "behind you," because there's no facing. That's why you don't have to declare which direction you're looking when using Spot or the Lightsaber Defense feats. You're assumed to be aware of your surroundings more or less all the time.

Second, traps don't initiate combat; they just make attacks. (Well, those that resolve by delivering an attack, that is.) There's no "surprise round" during which the trap gets to attack, and there's no initiative roll to see whether the hero acts before the trap does. The trap simply triggers, makes an attack, and either hits or doesn't.

Where the player is wrong is in his apparent confusion over the Wisdom check that Force-sensitive characters can make (by virtue of the Force-Sensitive feat) that lets a hero act during a surprise round, even if he failed his Listen or Spot checks to notice the danger in the more conventional ways. That, like the flat-footed rule, only applies to combat.

So, just to make it perfectly clear, yes, he keeps his Dexterity bonus to Defense against traps.

Q: Say, for whatever reason, someone wants to be hit by an attack -- for example, a captured Yuuzhan Vong informant tries to get himself killed in a surprise firefight rather than be interrogated. Is there any way for a character to purposely lower his bonuses to defense, or would this simply be considered favorable

circumstances for the attacker?

I assume that a character could willingly be "flat-footed" and thus lose his dodge and Dexterity bonus, but what about his class bonus? In the previous version of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* (or in *Dungeons & Dragons*), I'd rule that it's not possible because the character's armor would provide him with defense whether or not he wanted to be hit.

A: I think it's certainly fair for a character to forego both his Dexterity bonus and class bonus to his Defense, just as it's possible for a character not to use his Lightsaber Defense feat, or to declare his Dodge, or, for that matter, to choose not to use total defense.

Armor, especially under the revised core rules, is a different story. After all, if there's no rule for making a "called shot," a character shouldn't be able to declare that he's letting the attack hit an unarmed portion of his body. (However, if your group is using the optional "Hit Locations" rules from the *Galactic Campaign Guide*, you *can* allow this sort of thing, though the character still shouldn't be able to specify *which* unarmored part of his body he wants the attack to hit.)

Q: Along those lines, it states in the revised rules that a character's class bonus represents his "combat savvy." Using the logic above, this would seem to imply that a character who knows how *not* to be hit would also know how *to* be hit -- thus changing the bonus into a penalty.

A: You're certainly free to allow that as a house rule, but it makes combat a little too complex, so I wouldn't make it an official ruling (and thus, applicable to all campaigns).

Now, by the same token, I wouldn't allow a character to forego only *part* of his Defense bonus due to Dexterity or class. It would have to be all or nothing, to keep combat from slowing down as players decide just how much of a penalty they're willing to take. So, to keep it nice and simple, the player should have to declare whether he's foregoing an entire type of bonus -- dodge, circumstance, competence, or whatever -- rather than stating that he's giving up his Dexterity bonus to Defense but not his class bonus, and so on. (Or, worse yet, giving up only *part* of his Dexterity bonus.)

Q: That raises another question of bonuses to attack rolls. Can a character choose to forego them? If I can "take 10" on an ability, can I also "take 0"?

A: Not exactly. "Take 10" and "take 20" are game rules with very specific requirements and effects. "Take 0" isn't just a way of not having to roll the die. However, given the ruling about foregoing bonuses on Defense, it's certainly reasonable to allow foregoing bonuses on attack (or saves, grapple checks, skill checks, and so on). You should use the same all-or-nothing restriction: You can forego all of your base attack bonus, for example (not just part of it), but you can keep your bonus due to Strength or Dexterity, if that's what you want to do.

Q: Does the *Ultimate Alien Anthology* give any clue to Darth Maul's species? If it doesn't, do you know what his species is?

A: Yes, though I don't know if it's spelled out as such in the *Ultimate Alien Anthology*, any more than it's spelled out in the revised core rulebook. Darth Maul is a Zabrak, just like Eeth Koth, one of the Jedi High Council members in *The Phantom Menace*.



Q: The sandstorm rules in *Secrets of Tatooine* state that "the blowing sand stings, inflicting 1d4 points of vitality damage every round to anyone caught out in the open." Well, in my game, the characters were in the middle of a sandstorm on Duro, and one of them fell to zero vitality points. He argued that because the sourcebook specifically mentions "1d4 points of vitality damage," he takes *only* vitality damage, not wound damage. He said that if the book had meant wound damage, it would have said "1d4 points of damage" instead. Was he correct?

A: No. First, remember that *Secrets of Tatooine* was written using the original core rulebook, rather than the newer, improved, revised core rulebook, and we noted damage slightly differently back then. (We specified which kind of damage, so that we wouldn't get questions like "Is it vitality or wound damage?")

Second, in the revised core rulebook, the rules are more clear: When you lose vitality, you start taking wound damage instead. So, no, the original core rules aren't quite sturdy enough to prevent his character from taking wound damage.

Q: In the *Dark Side Sourcebook*, it states that cortosis weave "deactivates any lightsaber that damages the wearer." This description has led to some confusion in our game. The GM says the cortosis turns off the lightsaber only temporarily, and the weapon can be reignited the following round. I think it should disable the lightsaber (requiring a Repair check to fix the weapon) or turn off the lightsaber before the wearer takes any damage. Could you please clarify your meaning for us?

A: Glad to. Cortosis weave was based on the Dark Horse *Star Wars* comic *Jedi Council: Acts of War* -- specifically, on a scene in which a Jedi Knight attacks a Yinchorri warrior wearing a cortosis gauntlet, which deactivates her lightsaber. The Yinchorri attempts to finish off the Jedi, but she uses the Force to call her lightsaber back to her hand, switches it on, and kills the warrior. So, obviously, the "shut-off" effect isn't particularly long-lasting.

Now, the gauntlet in the comic isn't exactly a cortosis weave but a cortosis *shield*, as I pointed out in *Star Wars Gamer* #8. The principle is basically the same, but because a cortosis weave is just cortosis fibers worked into armor, it isn't sufficient to stop the damage before shutting off the lightsaber. The same applies to cortosis ore, which isn't pure enough to prevent the mineral matrix from being damaged before shutting off the lightsaber (as seen in Timothy Zahn's *Vision of the Future*). Cortosis *shields*, on the other hand, are refined cortosis with all the impurities removed, so there are no "weaker" metals for the lightsaber blade to damage.

About the Author

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Jedi Counseling 50: JD's Last

[JD Wiker](#)

Friends, this is my final installment of "Jedi Counseling." The column will go on, though Wizards of the Coast would like it to start covering the **Star Wars Miniatures** game as well. And while I've just finished the Rebel Storm Booster Pack, and I'm currently working on another sourcebook for the game, I don't have the same kind of foundation that I have with the [Star Wars Roleplaying Game](#). That is, I wasn't there from the beginning, so I can't offer the same kinds of insights. I can't explain what the designers were thinking. It's time for me to pass the torch.



Over the last few years of answering questions in "Jedi Counseling," I've mainly addressed how the *Star Wars* Roleplaying Game works, with some occasional advice for Gamemasters. But I still get a lot of questions about how to run games, how to handle game groups, how to award Dark Side Points, and so forth. So for this last column, I'm going to tackle some of those questions, because I may not get this chance again any time soon.

Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Q: Are lightsaber beams gyroscopically balanced? My GM is adamant that they are, but I think that lightsabers would be too dangerous to use, because even the slightest muscle spasm in the user's body could create a considerable and unpredictable arc that could prove fatal to the wielder -- as well as his target or nearby companions. I voiced this concern to the GM, and he said that I was quite right in my interpretation. Now he requires that our two Jedi players make additional Dexterity checks not only for every lightsaber-related action but also for every round their lightsabers are active.

We think this is over the top, and, to be honest, it's bringing the game almost to a standstill. Are these rules the GM's prerogative, or could there be a compromise? After all, *Star Wars* and real-world physics have never really gone hand in hand, have they?

A: No, they haven't, and this sort of situation is the reason why. In the final analysis, there's just no good reason to enforce real-world physics in a setting that's supposed to be more cinematic and heroic. It shouldn't require more than a loose grasp of physics -- gravity, speed, heat, cold, atmosphere, and so forth -- to play an enjoyable session of the *Star Wars* Roleplaying Game. (If you want more realism in your *Star Wars* campaign, pick up *d20 Future* and convert the rules from that.) In other words, it shouldn't *matter* whether a lightsaber is gyroscopically balanced or not. It works like we see in the movies, and that should be good enough.

But your question brings up a secondary issue that I think bears addressing: excessive die rolls. We made the rules simple enough so that the players wouldn't have to roll for every little thing. If we could keep the dice rolls for any *one* resolution down to two rolls, great! (And one roll was even better.)

Rolling extra dice, as you have seen in your campaign, slows down the game -- and that, in turn, discourages players from using the abilities that call for those extra die rolls. My professional advice, then, is for GMs to avoid any ruling that calls for additional die rolls *on a regular basis*, but not to do away with them altogether. Since your situation clearly falls into the former category, I'd suggest that your GM drop the Dexterity rolls for using lightsabers.



Q: What are the rules for custom-building a droid? How much does it cost to give it good ability scores and so forth?

A: There aren't any rules for it. When we first created the *Star Wars* droid rules, we just didn't anticipate that players would spend that much time building droids when they could simply purchase them. However, in the years since that time, I've gotten enough questions on the subject to have recognized that some sort of system

was necessary -- and that thought was very much in my mind when I worked on the robotics chapter of *d20 Future*. If Wizards of the Coast ever creates a "book of droids," I imagine that it would draw heavily on that system, so you might want to take a look at that and see if it meets your needs.

Q: I just saw the latest episode of *Clone Wars* on the *Star Wars* website, and I really like the character of General Grievous. What are his stats?

A: I get questions like this a lot, and I have to wonder if people think that I have a secret repository of game stats somewhere. I don't. So while this might seem like a harsh response, it's the best way to learn: Make up the stats yourself. After all, that's what I do. Sure, you might make mistakes, but you take that risk with anything you do for the first time. The published game designers had to learn, by trial and error, how to design game stats -- just like Tiger Woods had to learn, by trial and error, how to play golf. So take a stab at it, and be prepared to change your design if you find problems. That's a simplification of what professional game designers do, but it also happens to work.



Q: But my group will only play with the official version!

A: Then they must learn patience, Padawan. Comic-book companies, animation studios, and book publishers create new characters, equipment, and creatures faster than the roleplaying game can keep up. The official game stats might be a long time coming.

But if what your players are *really* worried about is that you'll create some kind of creature or character who might kill their characters, then playtest it: Set up a scenario involving the new creation, and make sure the players understand that the consequences of the scenario have no effect on their characters or the campaign. If your creation wins too easily, tone it down; if your creation loses badly, beef it up. And do it before you present the players with the creature or character for real.

The same logic applies to new skills, feats, or prestige classes that you invent. The best way to test these things is to have the players create new characters, or higher-level versions of their existing characters, and make these new rules available to them. If everybody takes a particular skill, it might be broken and need serious revision. The same is true if *nobody* wants it. The next step, though, is to playtest those characters, with their new skills and such, in a typical scenario (just like playtesting a new creature or character), and see what kind of impact it has -- and whether your players think of interesting, unplanned uses for the new rule that you didn't.

Q: When GMing *Star Wars* campaigns, especially those that include Jedi heroes, debates inevitably arise regarding how Jedi should behave. For example, a Jedi character in my campaign routinely refuses to enter combat, and sometimes uses his Force powers against the other heroes (or attacks their weapons) to prevent them from fighting, too. He's generating all kinds of ill will, but he insists it's what a Jedi would do. As a GM, what's the best way to resolve these issues?

A: There's no doubt in my mind that the player is overstepping his bounds as a Jedi Knight. The Jedi aren't the police force of the galaxy, and they aren't supposed to enforce their values on *anyone*. After all, we've never seen a Jedi in the movies stop an ally from fighting, have we? As long as the cause is just, they lend a hand. And even in the novels and comics, they try to stop fights only when they believe that bloodshed can be avoided.

By deciding when the other characters should fight, and how far they can go, the Jedi is effectively setting himself up as the leader of the team (assuming he wasn't appointed as such). Jedi aren't supposed to be leaders. They're supposed to be consultants for the leaders, and they're supposed to defer to the judgment of the leaders.

Q: I believe that while Jedi should strive to resolve issues peacefully, they should not rob other people of their free will. To do so would be to give way to arrogance, which I would call a flirtation with the dark side. Wouldn't

rendering one's comrades unable to defend themselves lead to the dark side?

A: Not really. It's not a question of "dark side or not." It's more a player-interaction ethics issue. In effect, this player is telling the other players how to play the game. By preventing them from fighting, he's effectively taking their dice away from them. That's not cool, even if it might be in character -- or if he *thinks* it might be in character.

It's not really a roleplaying issue, either. He's created a philosophy for his character that precludes the other players from enjoying the game. Bad call. It's no different, in effect, from a Gamorrean soldier who wants to attack everything (thus forcing the other characters to back him up). Either way, it infringes upon the rights of the other players. The player can rationalize this behavior however he wants, but it's still rude.

I should also discuss group dynamics and the role and responsibilities of the GM. In my experience, the GM's role is that of a host, because a roleplaying game session is effectively a party: It's people getting together to be social, eat and drink, and have fun. So the GM's role is to make sure everyone has a good time at the party. Sometimes, that means having a talk with a party guest who's being rude to the others. And if that doesn't work, it might mean asking that person to leave the party.

Yes, it's unpleasant. Yes, it makes people feel uncomfortable. And yes, it generates hard feelings. But those are all feelings, and they'll pass. Mature people can deal with those feelings, get past them, and perhaps even modify their behavior so it doesn't happen again. Immature people can't. When it comes right down to it, who would you rather have at your parties -- mature people or immature people?

About the Author

JD Wiker worked in Wizards of the Coast's RPG R&D department on the Alternity line, including the Dark*Matter campaign setting, before joining the *Star Wars* Roleplaying Game design team. Some of JD's *Star Wars* titles include the core rulebook, *The Dark Side Sourcebook*, *The Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*, the *Hero's Guide*, and the *Galactic Campaign Guide*. JD is currently freelancing, while also serving as president of The Game Mechanics, a d20 design studio and winners of the silver ENnie Award for Best Free Product or Web Enhancement for *Initiative Cards*. (Download them for free at www.thegamemechanics.com.) JD also answers *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* questions on his own message boards, at www.jdwiker.com.

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Jedi Counseling 51

Gary M. Sarli

Star Wars Roleplaying Game Questions

Q: In the *Revised Core Rulebook*, starship shields have a damage reduction, but in *Starships of the Galaxy*, none of the shields have damage reduction, and the ship creation tables also don't show a damage reduction for shields. Can you provide the appropriate DR for the shield generators table on page 10 of *Starships of the Galaxy*?

A: First, shield DR is always equal to hull DR. Second, because it pre-dated the most recent printing of the *Revised Core Rulebook*, you should *double* all DRs listed in *Starships of the Galaxy*. For example, on Table 1-1, a Colossal starship should have DR 60, and this DR applies to its hull and shields.

Q: As starship descriptions don't say whether they have extra emplacement points, should I assume that all emplacement points are already used?

A: Yes. A starship has no emplacement points remaining unless its description specifically states otherwise. For example, the YT-2400 is described as having seven free emplacement points already installed (in addition to the six that are actually used).

Q: A player posed a few interesting questions to me a week ago: What would happen if a player activated a ship's hyperdrive while inside a docking bay on another starship with a clear route out of the ship? Same question, but what if the docking bay doors are closed? What about within a planet's atmosphere? Could you deactivate all the hyperdrive safety features to make any of these possible, and what would the effects be?

A: In each of these cases, no, a hyperdrive will not function. There is simply too much mass too close to the starship to allow the jump to hyperspace, even if the safety features on the hyperdrive were somehow bypassed. After all, if this were possible, Han Solo would have just jumped to hyperspace once the *Millennium Falcon* was brought into the Death Star's hangar bay and easily escaped.

Q: Is using Move Object to move an opponent a move action or a full-round action? I'm not sure if just moving someone counts as an "attack."

A: Yes, moving a target against its will counts as an "attack" for this purpose, just as moving someone with a Bantha Rush is an attack. Therefore, using Move Object in this way is a full-round action.

Q: Can the Illusion skill be used to create a light source?

A: Yes. Such a light source can illuminate up to daylight-equivalent, but not so bright as to actually cause blindness or any other adverse effect. The maximum area illuminated is determined by the vitality point cost per round. For example, if you're paying 3 VP/round, your light could illuminate a 10-meter-radius sphere.

Star Wars Miniatures Questions

Q: I'm confused about how Strafe Attack and Accelerate interact for a Commando on Speeder Bike. How far can I move while using Strafe Attack?

A: You can do one of four things: 1) Make a normal attack and then move up to 6 squares (including Strafe Attack, if applicable); 2) Move up to 6 squares (including Strafe Attack, if applicable) and then make a normal attack; 3) Move up to 12 squares including Strafe Attack; or, 4) Move up to 24 squares *without* using Strafe Attack.

This applies to the Scout Trooper on Speeder Bike, as well.

Q: When using Strafe Attack, do you ignore low cover?

A: Yes. You always ignore low cover in your own square or adjacent squares, and Strafe Attack is used against targets in your own square.

Q: I've noticed that the Droid descriptor states: "A Droid character...is not subject to commander effects." Does this mean that IG-88 and 4-LOM would not get the +2 Attack bonus from Jabba the Hutt's commander effect if they were his followers even though they are Bounty Hunters as well as Droids?

A: Correct, they don't get the bonus.

Q: Does this mean that C-3PO and R2-D2 would not be able to move 2 extra squares if they end their turn within 6 squares of Princess Leia, Senator and were her followers?

A: Correct, they don't get the bonus movement.

Q: Does this mean that if any of the 4 Droids mentioned above were:

a) being shot at by a Stormtrooper that had not moved on his turn and was within 6 squares of a Stormtrooper Officer, that Stormtrooper would not receive the +3 Attack bonus against the Droids?

b) being shot at by a Stormtrooper within 6 squares of General Veers, the Stormtrooper could not gain the benefit of Accurate Shot against the Droids?

c) if an Imperial Officer ended his turn within 6 squares of a Stormtrooper, that Stormtrooper could not make an immediate attack against the Droids?



A: No, in all of these cases, the Stormtrooper—not the droids—is the subject of the commander effect. Therefore, the Stormtrooper still gains the bonus.

Q: If a Mon Calamari Mercenary takes his double attack against his opponent can he elect to receive a combined fire bonus from a valid ally on the first attack, and then take another combined fire bonus from a different valid ally on the second attack?

A: Yes. Each combined fire bonus only applies to one attack, and you can have different characters combine to provide a bonus on more than one attack.

Q: In order for a mini to contribute to Combined Fire the rulebook says it has to line of sight to the target and not have already been activated in the round. It does not say whether they have to be combining on a legal target. So what happens in the following scenarios?

Scenario #1: Luke Skywalker, Rebel is shooting at an Imperial Officer that has cover but is the nearest enemy to Luke. The Rebel player wants to use a Rebel Trooper (that has not activated yet this round and has line of sight to the Imperial Officer) to give a combined fire bonus to Luke's shot. However, there is a Stormtrooper mini closer to the Rebel Trooper than the Imperial Officer. Can the Rebel Trooper give a combined fire bonus to Luke's shot? What if the Rebel Trooper were adjacent to the Stormtrooper. Could he still give a combined fire bonus to Luke's shot?

A: Yes, in both cases.

Q: Scenario #2: Han Solo is using Accurate Shot to snipe at Darth Vader, Sith Lord (who has cover behind several Stormtroopers.) Han needs help to hit Vader's monstrous cover-assisted Defense. Can some Rebel Troopers be used to combine fire on Han's shot even though they do not have the Accurate Shot special ability?

A: Yes. In all cases, the only requirement is that the character who is combining fire (i.e., providing the bonus to the attacking character) has line of sight and has not activated yet in the round. The target need not be a legal target for the combining character—obviously, however, it must be a legal target for the attacking character.

Q: Can the Imperial Officer's commander effect be used on a character that has already activated?

A: Yes. The commander effect grants an immediate attack for the designated character. This attack is outside the normal activation for the character, so that character will act normally before and after the immediate attack.

Q: If a Heavy Stormtrooper is within 6 squares of a Stormtrooper Officer, he gains the commander effect +3 Attack bonus to his shot against a valid foe. After taking that shot, the Imperial player uses his second activation to move an Imperial Officer within 6 squares and uses the commander effect to give Heavy Stormtrooper an immediate attack. Does this immediate attack also benefit from the +3 Attack bonus granted by the Stormtrooper Officer since they are still within 6 squares of each other and the Heavy Stormtrooper hasn't moved?

A: Yes. Commander effects stack as long as they aren't giving a bonus to the same roll or statistic. In this case, one commander effect is giving a bonus to attacks, while the other isn't providing a "bonus" at all—it provides an immediate attack outside the normal turn sequence.

About the Author

Gary M. Sarli is a freelance writer and editor whose credits include *Ultimate Adversaries* (Star Wars RPG) and *Monster Manual III* (Dungeons & Dragons). He also moderates on the Wizards.COMmunity message boards as WizO the Hutt, cheerfully feeding Code of Conduct violators to the Sarlacc. Gary still works as a staff member for [SWRPGNetwork](#), three-time ENnie Award winner in the Best Fan Website category and host of the [Star Wars RPG Frequently Asked Questions](#).

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Jedi Counseling 52: Zap!

Gary M. Sarli

How do you avoid attacks of opportunity with disarming an opponent? Does a Jedi's increased lightsaber damage count as "bonus dice"? Can Emperor Palpatine zap himself with Force Lightning? The Jedi counselor, Gary M. Sarli, answers these *Star Wars* game questions and more in this installment of "Jedi Counseling."

Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Star Wars Roleplaying Game Questions

Q: Recently, my gaming group got into a huge discussion about Disarm and attacks of opportunity. Player A has Martial Arts and was in melee with Player B (wielding a vibro-axe). Player A decided to attempt to disarm Player B, but we became confused when Martial Arts did not clarify whether you were considered armed or not. If Player A was not armed, Player B would get an attack of opportunity. How is this supposed to work?

A: If you have Martial Arts, you are essentially considered either armed or unarmed, whichever is more beneficial to you at the time. Usually, being "armed" is better -- but, for example, if you successfully disarm someone using Martial Arts, you are "unarmed" in that you can now have the weapon in your hands, at your discretion.

However, there is an error in the Disarm text. Attempting to disarm a character provokes an attack of opportunity if the target threatens you. Someone armed with a melee weapon always threatens you, but someone armed only with a ranged weapon does not. Therefore, you would have taken an attack of opportunity in any event.

The only exception would be if you also had the Improved Disarm feat; in that case, you wouldn't draw an attack of opportunity. Having both Martial Arts and Improved Disarm is the only way to make an unarmed disarm attempt against a threatening foe without drawing an attack of opportunity. (If you have only Martial Arts, the disarm action provokes the attack of opportunity, while if you only have Improved Disarm, making an unarmed attack provokes it.)

Q: In *Dungeons & Dragons*, bonus damage dice are never multiplied, and in a recent "Jedi Counseling" column, you noted that the same is true in the *Star Wars* Roleplaying Game. But what about the bonus damage a Jedi inflicts with his lightsaber? Does this get multiplied, or would only the base damage be affected?

A: Good question! A Jedi's lightsaber damage is considered to increase the *base* damage of the lightsaber itself while he wields it. Thus, it's not "bonus" damage in the normal sense, and the "Increase Lightsaber Damage" special ability never calls it "bonus damage" or "extra damage." Therefore, a Jedi's increased lightsaber damage, not just the base 2d8, would be doubled in the appropriate circumstances (for example, using the Spirited Charge feat from the *Hero's Guide*).

Q: A friend and I were arguing over the Master Duelist class in the *Hero's Guide*. He wants to take Martial Arts to qualify for Master Duelist, saying that "unarmed" is eligible for Weapon Finesse and Weapon Focus. As "unarmed" appears in the weapons table, it's a legal weapon, and the prestige class doesn't clarify in which way the "weapon" has to be similar to those listed. Because it says "weapon," and he says a fist can be a weapon, he says that armed/unarmed is not a consideration. However, I think he's wrong, because being unarmed is not remotely similar to any fencing or dueling weapon. Could you please clarify this for me?

A: "Unarmed" does not qualify for the Master Duelist class. Longsword, vibroblade, lightsaber, and Adumari blastersword are examples of acceptable weapons, but they include "or similar weapon" to cover things like the vibrorapier in the *Arms & Equipment Guide* (page 30). It is *not* meant to cover completely dissimilar weapons, such as vibroaxes, clubs, spears, or unarmed attacks.

So, here's the official ruling: In order for a weapon (other than those specifically listed) to qualify for the Master Duelist class, it *must* be swordlike in form and function (in other words, a one-handed, non-hafted, bladed weapon). In any event, the GM makes the final call on what qualifies as "swordlike" for this purpose.

Star Wars Miniatures Questions

Q: Let's say that Emperor Palpatine is adjacent to Luke Skywalker, and no other characters are adjacent to Luke. If the Emperor uses Force Lightning, would he take damage for being adjacent to the target?

A: Yes. The Emperor would indeed take damage from his own Force Lightning in this case. The only way he could avoid taking the damage is if there were at least two other characters adjacent to Luke.



Q: Is there a range limit to attacks? I can't find if this is discussed in the rules.

A: There is no range limit for attacks, but note that some special abilities do have range limits. For example, Grenades has a range of 6 squares, and a character with Melee can only attack adjacent opponents. The only requirement is that you have line of sight to a legal target.

Q: Why isn't there a range limit or range modifier, then? Wouldn't that be more realistic than assuming that a blaster pistol and a blaster rifle have the same range?

A: Range limits and range modifiers were intentionally left out of the Miniatures game in order to keep it quick to play and easy to learn. Having to count squares on every single attack slows things down quite a bit! If you want that level of detail (and more), the *Star Wars* Roleplaying Game has what you need. If you play both games, you could also import the range rules from the Roleplaying Game into the Miniatures game as a house rule. (Just don't expect such rules to become official!)

Q: Would a Commando (or Scout Trooper) on Speeder Bike draw an attack of opportunity when it enters an enemy's square? My group's thinking is that it would, and we can't find anything in Strafe that says otherwise.

A: The two speeder bike characters do not draw attacks of opportunity, but it has nothing to do with Strafe. The Flight special ability allows a character to ignore enemy characters, low objects, and pits while moving. If you ignore enemy characters while moving, you also ignore attacks of opportunity. (See the Flight entry in the glossary.)

Q: I'm confused about Jabba the Hutt's Fringe Reinforcements special ability. In a 100-point game, does this mean you build a 70-point squad, look at your opponent, and then add 30 points of Fringe characters? Or do you build a 100-point squad, look at your opponent, and then add 30 points of Fringe characters, for a total of 130 points?

A: You build a 100-point squad, look at your opponent, and then add 30 points of Fringe characters. Yes, this does give you a total of 130 points of characters, but you do not score any points for defeating any of these extra 30 points of characters. (They are built into Jabba the Hutt's point value -- by himself, he definitely isn't worth 50 points!)



Q: If I have two Stormtrooper Officers within 6 squares of a Stormtrooper who has not moved, would their commander effects stack and give the Stormtrooper a +6 bonus to his attack?

A: No. Commander effects do not stack if they provide a bonus to the same roll or statistic, and duplicate commander effects never stack. In this case, the Stormtrooper only gets a +3 bonus.

Q: Can an Imperial Officer use his commander effect to give an immediate attack to a Heavy Stormtrooper if the Heavy Stormtrooper has moved? The glossary definition of Heavy Weapon says you can't move and attack in the same turn, so I don't see how this could happen.

A: Yes, the Heavy Stormtrooper *can* gain an immediate attack from the Imperial Officer. The key is that Heavy Weapon doesn't allow you to attack and move in the same *turn*. During the Heavy Stormtrooper's turn, he is only moving. Then, at the end of the Imperial Officer's turn, he designates the Heavy Stormtrooper to get an extra attack. Thus, the Heavy Stormtrooper is not moving and attacking in the same turn.

Remember that a "turn" is the period that a particular character is activated, and only one character has a turn at any given time. Don't confuse it with a "round," the period starting when both players roll initiative, continuing until all characters on both sides have been activated, and ending just before the next time they roll initiative.

Q: I have a question about attacks of opportunity. When your figure leaves an enemy figure's adjacent square, it provokes the attack of opportunity. Does this attack of opportunity occur even if your figure still remains adjacent to the enemy? For example, Vader moves and becomes adjacent to Rebel Trooper. If he continues moving, but remains adjacent, does Trooper still get a swing?



A: Yes. You get an attack of opportunity if a character leaves an adjacent square, even if he is moving into another adjacent square.

Q: If Vader were to keep moving through the Rebel Trooper's adjacent squares, would the Rebel Trooper get more attacks of opportunity?

A: No. You only get one attack of opportunity during a given character's turn. So even if you move all the way around an enemy to the other side, moving out of four adjacent squares, the enemy character only gets one attack of opportunity against you. (If you provoke attacks of opportunity from different characters, of course, they each get to attack you once.)

About the Author

Gary M. Sarli is a freelance writer and editor whose credits include *Ultimate Adversaries* (Star Wars RPG) and *Monster Manual III* (Dungeons & Dragons). He also moderates on the Wizards.COMmunity message boards as WizO the Hutt, cheerfully feeding Code of Conduct violators to the Sarlacc. Gary still works as a staff member for [SWRPGNetwork](#), three-time ENnie Award winner in the Best Fan Website category and host of the [Star Wars RPG Frequently Asked Questions](#).

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Jedi Counseling 53: Backups

Gary M. Sarli

Can droid heroes back themselves up? Can Wookiees find enough inner peace to use Martial Arts while raging? Why can't a character use a Special Ability more than once on his turn? The Jedi counselor, Gary M. Sarli, answers these *Star Wars* game questions and more in this installment of "Jedi Counseling."



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Star Wars Roleplaying Game Questions

Q: Could droid heroes duplicate themselves by crafting (or buying) a new chassis, copying their programming to a computer system, and then transferring their programming to the new chassis (as stated in "droid death" in Chapter 15 of the *Revised Core Rulebook*), thus creating a "backup hero"?

A: Yes. IG-88 essentially did this in a short story in *Tales of the Bounty Hunters*. He made duplicates of himself -- IG-88A, IG-88B, IG-88C, and IG-88D -- but they were all "IG-88" as far as anyone else knew.



Note, however, that the "backup hero," if active, won't necessarily agree to its position as a "backup." It might want to strike out on its own, or it might decide that the original droid should be the backup! Furthermore, its memories might be dated if a lot of time passes between the creation of the backup and its activation. In any event, the GM (not the player) would be in control of the new "hero" if both were active at the same time.

Q: An interesting question came up in our last session. Is there a way to purchase a droid with extra levels, either professional or heroic? One of the players had figured it should be possible, since a player droid can level up, and he figured that the droid should level up over time. If it were possible, how much would it cost per level to purchase an upgraded droid? Say a person wanted to purchase/build a droid. How would he build it with differing levels, and how would that change the price?

A: There aren't any specific rules for this, but I'd suggest that a droid's cost should be doubled for +1 level or tripled for +2 levels. Higher-level droids wouldn't normally be for sale, but in the extremely rare cases where they are available, double their price for every two additional levels. Also, you should count heroic class levels (for example, scoundrel, soldier, and so on) double for this purpose. For example, adding two levels of thug to a battle droid would triple its cost. Likewise, adding one level of soldier would also triple its cost, because you treat one soldier level as two levels for purposes of cost.

This is just a rough guideline intended to be used as a house rule. Actually finding droids with more levels may be difficult, because many owners memory-wipe their droids fairly often. More importantly, droids with a lot of experience (in other words, more levels) are much more likely to be independent -- such as 4-LOM, IG-88, or C-3PX -- and independent droids don't sell themselves. (However, they can be hired, just as you can hire an NPC bounty hunter.)

In the end, it's up to the GM to decide, on a case-by-case basis, when a higher-level droid might be available for sale and how much it might cost.

Q: Is it possible to give pre-made droids new feats? For example, I'd like my medical droid to be able to perform cybernetic surgery. Can I get a new processor for the droid, or am I just out of luck?

A: The feats that come with the basic droid model are hard-wired and cannot be altered. However, at your GM's discretion, there might be variant models of droids that are *designed*



with different feats—for example, there might be a "surgeon" version of the standard medical droid. In fact, the MD Series Medical Droid (in the *Arms & Equipment Guide*) has such variants listed in its description, and the different versions (MD-0, MD-1, and so on) have feats appropriate for their specialty. It is reasonable to assume that other variants may exist for other droids, but the GM should carefully consider such variants on a case-by-case basis, and you should expect that a rare variant might cost more than the standard model.

Q: Other than transferring a droid's programming to a new and better chassis, is there a way to improve the droid's physical attributes (Str, Dex, Con)? Could I modify the droid, and if so, how much would it cost?

A: I suggest that you can create an "upgrade package" that provides an equipment bonus to an ability (+2, +4, or +6 maximum) at a cost of 1,000 x (bonus squared). Thus, a +2 Str would cost 4,000 credits, and a +4 Dex would cost 16,000 credits. I also suggest that the difficulty of creating such an upgrade package is a Craft (Droids) check against DC 10 + (5 x bonus). Clearly, it is much less expensive to purchase a droid that was designed with the desired ability scores, but these upgrade packages are still less expensive than the cybernetic equivalent for organic characters (see Chapter Six of the *Hero's Guide* for details).

Q: I'm planning a mission where the PCs run the risk of being poisoned by one of the bad guys. The villain has poisoned a bottle of wine that has been given to the players as a gift. To me, this sounds like a hazard encounter, and I want to award experience points to each hero that drinks the wine and lives. Are there any guidelines on how to assign a Challenge Code and award experience points based on the type of poison used?

A: It's hard to gauge poison as a hazard, because it doesn't inflict damage the way that a normal hazard would. As a rough guideline, add up the maximum ability damage that the poison could inflict, and determine the encounter threat according to that: Simple (up to 6), Challenging (7 to 11), or Extreme (12 or more). For example, "deadly poison" does 1d6 points of Con damage (primary) and 2d6 points of Con damage (secondary), and that's a total of 18 possible points of ability damage. That would be an Extreme encounter for almost any character because it could kill almost anyone, regardless of level. "Knockout gas," on the other hand, does 1d6 Dex/Unconsciousness, so that's a maximum of six points of ability damage -- only a Simple encounter for most characters. You can always adjust something up or down if its save is unusually easy or hard, of course.

I do have one other suggestion, though: Give the players at least one chance to detect the poison before they're exposed to it. Detecting and avoiding the threat should generally earn the same experience points as surviving it.

Q: I'm not sure how reactivating a lightsaber after an attack on cortosis armor works. In the core rules, "Activating an Item" is a free action that provokes an attack of opportunity. So does that mean that if a Jedi reactivates his lightsaber in a melee fight, his opponent is allowed an attack of opportunity?

A: Activating a lightsaber does not provoke an attack of opportunity, for the same reason that you don't provoke an attack of opportunity from switching the fire mode on a blaster or drawing a weapon. In each case, you're not particularly distracted from the fight—the switch on a lightsaber is designed to be easy to use in the heat of battle, after all, just like the trigger on a blaster. The "Activating an Item" action is intended to cover things like sensor packs, electronic lockpicks, or any other item that requires you to divert your focus from the fight and let down your guard.

Q: In [Jedi Counseling 21](#), you mentioned that if a Defel buys an item at a higher price, it could share his light-absorbing invisibility. What if a Human purchases a suit of completely encompassing armor (or simple clothing, for that matter) made of this material? Would he be invisible with the same rules as a Defel? While it wouldn't be nearly as quiet, wouldn't this make the shadowsuit (from the *Arms & Equipment Guide*) seem a little less appealing?

A: The shadowsuit is the closest that *Star Wars* technology can come to invisibility at the individual character level. A Defel's equipment doesn't need to be 100 percent invisible to avoid giving him away—it just has to be well camouflaged and non-reflective. In other words, it has to be built a lot like a shadowsuit. That's what causes such equipment to be more expensive.

Q: In my group, I play a Wookiee martial artist. Because I can't take actions that require concentration and calm while I'm raging, my GM said that I can't use any Martial Arts feats from the *Revised Core Rulebook* or the *Hero's Guide* except for the Wrruushi Martial Arts feats. Is this interpretation of the rules correct?

A: Ultimately, it's up to your GM to make the final call -- it's his game. Still, the rules don't specifically prevent a Wookiee from using the various Martial Arts feats while raging. Here's a good rule of thumb: If a given feat has an Intelligence prerequisite (or if it has such a feat as a prerequisite) it's probably not usable when raging. For example, Combat Expertise requires Int 13+, so it won't work well when raging (and neither will Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, or Whirlwind Attack).

Star Wars Miniatures Questions

Q: I have a question about General Veers' commander effect, Accurate Shot. Does this apply to followers with melee attacks, or only those with ranged attacks?

A: Technically, it applies to all non-Unique followers; however, it doesn't *do* anything for melee characters. They can only attack adjacent characters, anyway.

Q: I'm totally lost on the Stealth ability and why you would use it. Can you please explain how it works?

A: Normally, if a target has cover, you cannot attack that character unless he is the nearest enemy. However, if the target has Stealth and is more than six squares away, it is never considered to be the "nearest enemy." In other words, even if he was the only character in line of sight, you wouldn't be able to attack him if he had cover and was more than six squares away. (Exception: Accurate Shot ignores the "nearest enemy" restriction, so, for example, Han Solo would still be able to shoot at you.)

Essentially, Stealth allows you to attack without being attacked in return. A squad full of characters with Stealth could be *very* difficult to beat if they carefully find cover every round and always keep their distance.

Q: If Mara Jade uses her Blaster Barrage Force power, and one of the targets she gets to make an attack against has not yet activated, does she get the Cunning Attack shot bonuses (+4 attack +10 damage vs. unactivated characters)?

A: Yes. Cunning Attack is always in effect (if the target is eligible, of course.)

Q: Let's say that Mara Jade is in the same squad as the Emperor. If Mara uses her Blaster Barrage (which would take one of her Force Points), can she use Hand of the Emperor to use her Blaster Barrage twice in the same turn?

A: No. Blaster Barrage replaces attacks. Mara Jade doesn't have another attack to "give up" to allow her to use it again. Her Hand of the Emperor ability would allow her to use a second Force Point to do something such as re-rolling an attack roll during the Blaster Barrage.



Q: Okay, how about this: Can Darth Vader use his Double Attack ability to use Lightsaber Sweep twice in one turn?

A: Again, no, for the same reason. Think about it this way: The miniatures rules are like a simplified version of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* combat rules—a character can choose *attack actions* (such as a single attack or using Force skills), *move actions* (most often, moving some number of squares), or *full-round actions* (such as making multiple attacks). A character can choose 1) one attack action and one move action, 2) two move actions, or 3) one full-round action. In no case does a character in the *Roleplaying Game* get *two* attack actions, so it would be impossible to use a Force skill twice in the same round. There is a specific full-round action, "full attack," that allows multiple *attacks*, but it doesn't allow multiple *attack actions*.

The miniatures rules are structured in a similar way. You can 1) attack and move (up to six squares), 2) move and attack, 3) move only (up to 12 squares), or, in the case of characters with Double Attack or Triple Attack, 4) make more than one attack without moving. This is meant to work just like a full attack in the *Roleplaying Game*. It allows more than one *attack*, but it can't be used to make any "replaces attacks" abilities. In the end, you can only use a "replaces attacks" ability once during your turn. (This question comes up quite often, so I hope this helps to illustrate the thinking behind the rules.)

Q: Does the Commander Effect for Darth Vader, Dark Jedi last after Vader is defeated? I don't see anything in the rules that explicitly covers this.

A: No. Most commander effects have a range limit, and so obviously they would end if the commander was defeated and removed from the battle. Still, the intent of the rules is for *all* commander effects to end when the commander is defeated.

Q: I have a question concerning the Probe Droid in multiplayer games. Let's say that Player A owns the Probe Droid. The Probe Droid is in melee contact with a character of Player B. Player C shoots and defeats the Probe Droid, which then self-destructs and causes enough damage to defeat Player B's character. Who gets the points from Player B's character?

A: Good question! Player A gets the points for Player B's character-it was defeated by Self Destruct, a special ability of Player A's probe droid. (Player C gets the points for Player A's probe droid, obviously, because he defeated it with a direct attack.)

Q: When an Imperial Officer uses his commander effect, can the character that is given the immediate attack use the combined fire rules if another character can see the target? So, in other words, is this a normal attack that can get a bonus from combined fire? Or is it just a one-time attack, with no bonus for combining fire?

A: No, you cannot combine fire on this attack (or on an attack of opportunity, for that matter). Note this clause at the beginning of the "Combined Fire" section in the rulebook: "When a character makes an attack *on its own turn* . . ." That "on its own turn" means it won't work for the Imperial Officer's commander effect, attacks of opportunity, or any other immediate attack that occurs outside of that character's turn. Conceptually, you should think of such an attack as a spontaneous opening that doesn't give the character enough time to try to coordinate allies in laying down a field of fire.



About the Author

Gary M. Sarli is a freelance writer and editor whose credits include *Ultimate Adversaries* (Star Wars RPG) and *Monster Manual III* (Dungeons & Dragons). He also moderates on the Wizards.COMmunity message boards as WizO the Hutt, cheerfully feeding Code of Conduct violators to the Sarlacc. Gary still works as a staff member for [SWRPGNetwork](#), three-time ENnie Award winner in the Best Fan Website category and host of the [Star Wars RPG Frequently Asked Questions](#).

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Jedi Counseling 54: Pursuit

Gary M. Sarli

Can any character build a lightsaber? Can you establish pursuit on a starship that moved at the end of last round? How many Force points can the Emperor accumulate? And is it *really* okay to steal from a killer? Gary M. Sarli answers these *Star Wars* game questions and more in this installment of "Jedi Counseling."



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Star Wars Roleplaying Game Questions

Q: When a pilot has successfully established pursuit of another airspeeder or starship, the rules state that he gains a "free attack" immediately after the target ship declares its speed for the round. Does this mean that the pilot gets this attack *plus* the attack(s) he would normally get each round?

A: Yes. Being in pursuit gives you one free attack each round, outside of your normal turn sequence. However, please note that you have to use your move actions to follow your target; while in pursuit, you are required to take every action your target does, including squares moved and stunts. Therefore, unless your target only takes a single move action to make simple maneuvers, you won't have any actions left to make any other attacks. This can happen if the pursued starship makes an attack, uses a move action to angle his shields, or anything else that isn't a move action to make simple maneuvers. During that action, he is coasting forward at his normal speed, so the pursuing starship can also make an attack while still coasting behind him. (See pages 218–220 of the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game Revised Core Rulebook* for more on simple maneuvers.)

Q: The pursuit rules state that pursuit may not be established if the target ship has not yet moved in the round. Does this mean "within 1 round" or does it mean in the same specific combat round? For instance, can a pilot establish pursuit of a ship in round 2, initiative count 19 if the ship last moved in round 1, initiative count 5? In this case, the target ship has not yet moved in the specific combat round in which pursuit is attempted.

A: Good question! My ruling is "within 1 round" -- in other words, as long as the target ship has moved since your last turn (in the previous round). The purpose of the rule is only to prevent a stationary starship (or space station) from being "pursued."

Q: Can an elite trooper use deadly strike with a vehicle or starship weapon?

A: Yes. An elite trooper can use deadly strike with any weapon he wields, and he is considered to be wielding a starship or vehicle weapon when he acting as a gunner.

Q: My GM and I had an argument about the elite trooper's deadly strike ability. He ruled that I could not use it with an "M/A Only" weapon (for example, a light repeating blaster) because using multifire or autofire required a full-round action, and I can't do two full-round actions in one turn. He also argued that deadly strike was a "finesse shot" and required a weapon that could be used to attack once in a round. Does that mean I can use deadly strike with grenades or flechette launchers? He says that I can, but is that correct?

A: Deadly strike won't work with multifire or autofire -- it has to be a single attack. However, as a house rule, the GM may permit you to use deadly strike with a light repeating blaster or other multifire/autofire-only weapon, with the restriction that the extra attacks automatically miss and you still suffer the normal multifire/autofire penalties. Another house rule would be to allow a "single shot selector switch" as a modification that costs 50% of the weapon's base price (see pages 5–6 of the *Arms & Equipment Guide* for details on modifying weapons). Such a switch would allow a light repeating blaster, for example, to make single shots in addition to multifire and autofire. (I just present these options so the heavy weapon specialist in a commando team won't have to switch weapons to use his best class feature.)

Deadly strike should *not* inflict maximum damage with a grenade or any other weapon with a blast radius. It applies only if the weapon inflicts a direct hit. (A missile that can inflict a direct hit *and* has a blast radius would be okay; the direct hit would get maximum damage, but the blast radius damage would not.) You would still get the +4 bonus to your attack in any event. That's just meant to represent you taking extra time to aim carefully, and you can carefully gauge your distance before throwing a grenade just as much as you can carefully line up a shot with a blaster.

Q: In [Jedi Counseling 48: Dark Side Points 2](#), you state, "But consider, as well, that who they steal from is as important as whether they steal. Is it an evil act, or even a morally questionable act, to steal a speeder from someone who tries to kill you?" This sounds like you're saying that if you're faced with a killer, it's okay to sink to his level. I posit that the distinction between stealing from a killer and stealing from a little old lady is not only unimportant, it's nonexistent. While a person may not feel any moral qualms about stealing from a killer, this does not mean that they shouldn't. To claim otherwise means you're starting to flirt with the philosophy that the ends justify the means.

A: Well, you're misinterpreting the point of that statement. It is meant in the context of a fight: If you are ambushed by someone on a speeder bike, is it morally acceptable to take control of the speeder bike to escape the confrontation? Yes -- in fact, by ending the fight short of killing your opponent, you are definitely committing the lesser of two evils. What if someone attacks you and dies during the fight -- can you scavenge gear (such as a speeder bike or a blaster) that you need? Again, yes. In both cases, you're *reacting* to the situation, not *causing* it.

It's another question altogether if you go out with *intent* to steal something from someone. In that case, you are intentionally committing acts for personal gain at another's expense. Note, again, how "survival" isn't really seen as "personal gain," so, for example, stealing the Death Star plans in order to save planets from destruction would not be considered "theft" from the point of view of the Force.

When in doubt, use this rule of thumb: Was the "crime" committed in self-defense? It is well established that a Jedi can fight and even kill in self-defense, but a Jedi would definitely start gaining Dark Side Points if he picked fights or committed murder. The same standard can be applied to "theft." If it was in self-defense (necessary for survival), it's probably okay. If it *wasn't* in self-defense (done for profit or just for fun), it's definitely worth a DSP. And there are limits to what "self-defense" will justify. Obviously, you'd have a very hard time proving that you had to "defend yourself" from an innocent civilian by stealing his speeder, but you could probably justify stealing a speeder from someone who is currently in the act of attacking you. Still, when in doubt, give the hero a DSP.

In conclusion: No, we are *not* saying that the ends justify the means, but the Force does recognize the right of every living thing to survive. (Living things *are* the source of the Force, after all: "Life creates it, makes it grow . . .")

Q: Can anyone skilled in the Force (such as a Force adept) attempt to make a lightsaber if he or she has all the necessary materials?

A: Well, I think the Sith can build lightsabers, too, unless you assume that Darth Maul ordered his double-bladed lightsaber from a HoloNet site. (I hear lightsabers-4-less.com has some nice discounts on bulk orders.)

All kidding aside, the answer is yes. It is probably possible for anyone with the proper Force feats to build a lightsaber. However, one would have to know *how* to build a lightsaber, so the GM should probably disallow it for anyone not brought up with a lot of exposure to Jedi techniques, a Jedi holocron, or a sample lightsaber to disassemble and examine. (Logically, a Force adept from a pre-industrial world in the Outer Rim would have at least as much trouble building a lightsaber without instructions as a fringer from the same planet would have building a blaster.) In the end, the GM makes the final call. A character can do it if the GM thinks he has sufficient reason to know how to build a lightsaber (and if the GM doesn't mind him having one).

So, my final call: Jedi can do it, Sith can do it (because they have common heritage with the Jedi), and everyone else is allowed to build a lightsaber *only* at the GM's discretion.

Q: How long does an energy cell last?

A: Unless an item gives a specific duration, assume that one energy cell will last as long as needed. Technically, it would eventually run out, but not soon enough for it to be worth keeping track of. For example, a lightsaber might last, say, 10 hours with a single energy cell, but that's 6,000 rounds of combat, so the odds that it would ever come up are miniscule. (Realistically, a lightsaber might only last 1 hour, but it *still* would probably never come up -- that's 600 rounds of combat.)

In any event, you can recharge most items that use energy cells, so you can assume that the PCs take care of this during their ordinary downtime, the same way you or I might recharge our mobile phones whenever they get a little low. It's just not worth devoting game time to something so mundane any more than we should spend time keeping track of how PCs do their laundry.

In the end, power cells run out when the GM *wants* them to run out. So, for example, a group of PCs marooned on a pre-industrial planet would run out of power as soon as the GM needs them to for the purpose of the adventure. The only test the GM needs to pass is one of believability: It wouldn't make sense for energy cells to run out if the heroes could have charged them the night before, but it *does* make sense that a Rebel commando unit operating on its own in the wilderness would eventually have to replace its energy cells.

Star Wars Miniatures Questions

Q: The Stormtrooper Officer's commander effect says it affects "trooper followers." Does this include Elite Stormtroopers, Snowtroopers, Scout Troopers, and Heavy Stormtroopers as well as normal Stormtrooper grunts?

A: It means *anyone* with "trooper" in the name, so long as that character is a follower. Thus, it would include Heavy Stormtroopers, Scout Troopers, and so on, plus any future miniatures that have "trooper" in their name. (There will be more.)

Q: Can Obi-Wan Kenobi use Force Heal on himself?

A: Yes. The latest version of the [FAQ](#) now states the official ruling that Obi-Wan can indeed heal himself.

Q: When Mara Jade uses her Blaster Barrage ability, what is considered a legal target? Do you determine legal targets before making any attacks, or before each individual attack? For example, if one enemy character provided cover to another enemy character, could Mara kill the first one and then attack the second one?

A: You determine which targets are legal targets before making *any* attacks with Blaster Barrage. A legal target is determined according to the normal rules -- in other words, you must have line of sight, if it has cover it must be the nearest target, and if any enemies are adjacent they are the only legal targets. In your example, no, the second character could not be attacked. It has cover and it is obviously not the closest character (whoever is providing cover must be closer, obviously), so it wouldn't be a legal target.

To get the most out of Mara Jade, you have to be careful to move to a square where 1) you have line of sight to a lot of characters, 2) you aren't adjacent to any characters, and 3) most of the characters in line of sight do not have cover. Of course, you can still get several attacks if you position yourself adjacent to several characters. You would get to attack each adjacent character once because each one would be a legal target.

Q: Does the Emperor's Force Renewal work if the Emperor doesn't take any actions?

A: Yes. Force Renewal grants 1 Force Point as soon as the character is activated. It's irrelevant what actions the character does or does not take after that. Thus, you can activate the Emperor, gain 1 Force Point, and then end his turn without taking any actions at all, if you wish.

Q: Is there any limit to the number of Force Points the Emperor can accumulate?

A: No. A character may accumulate any number of Force Points unless the special ability granting them says otherwise.

Q: If a character with Momentum (such as a Stormtrooper on Dewback) is adjacent to an opponent, can he move one square away, and then move one square back toward the opponent and gain the benefit of Momentum on his attack?

A: Yes, he would gain the benefit of Momentum on that attack, but keep in mind that he would be subject to an attack of opportunity when he moves out of the adjacent square. Thus, it's possible that you could get the character killed by trying to do this.

Q: Does a character with the Grenades special ability (such as the Bothan Spy) ever run out of grenades?

A: No, there is no limit. Unless a special ability lists some limited number of uses, it can be used indefinitely. This isn't entirely realistic, of course, but it's simply not worth the trouble of keeping track of ammunition. Besides, grenades in the *Star Wars* universe can be relatively small -- a character could easily carry 10, 20, or even more on a bandolier. A single Bothan Spy, for example, is unlikely to use this ability more times than that in a single battle.

Q: Does a Large character gain cover if any part of the figure is in a low cover square, or does the whole body have to be in (or behind) low cover?

A: If any part of the Large character is in low cover, it gains the benefit of cover.

Q: If a Twi'lek Bodyguard uses her bodyguard ability on C-3P0 when he is attacked by a Jawa (Ion Gun +20), would she take 10 damage (because she isn't a droid), or would she take 30 damage (because that's how much damage C-3P0 would have taken)?

A: I ran this by the designers, and our ruling is that the Twi'lek Bodyguard would take 30 damage. The Bodyguard ability always transfers the same amount of damage that the target character would have taken from the attack.

About the Author

Gary M. Sarli is a freelance writer and editor whose credits include *Ultimate Adversaries* (Star Wars RPG) and *Monster Manual III* (Dungeons & Dragons). He also moderates on the Wizards.COMmunity message boards as WizO the Hutt, cheerfully feeding Code of Conduct violators to the Sarlacc. Gary still works as a staff member for [SWRPGNetwork](#), three-time ENnie Award winner in the Best Fan Website category and host of the [Star Wars RPG Frequently Asked Questions](#).

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Jedi Counseling 55: Ship Squadrons

Gary M. Sarli

In this installment of "Jedi Counseling," Gary M. Sarli answers your rules questions about the **Star Wars Miniatures** game and the **Star Wars Roleplaying Game**. If you have a question for the counselor, send it in through the link at the end of this column, then check back here for the official answer!



Have a question for the counselor? See the link at the end of the column!

Star Wars Roleplaying Game Questions

Q: My campaign is rather war heavy, and I'm wondering about the exact fighter complements found on Imperial and Rebel capital ships. How many and what types of fighters do they carry?

A: An Imperial Star Destroyer typically carries a wing of 72 fighters broken into squadrons of twelve, most often including three squadrons of TIE fighters, one squadron of TIE interceptors, one squadron of TIE bombers, and one squadron of TIE/rc reconnaissance fighters. Imperial Star Destroyers also carry eight *Lambda*-class shuttles and several other craft such as landing barges that carry its complement of 20 AT-ATs and 30 AT-STs from orbit to a planet's surface. TIE interceptors, TIE bombers, and *Lambda*-class shuttles can be found in *Starships of the Galaxy*. TIE/rc are the same as TIE fighters except that they get a +1 equipment bonus on Pilot checks and attack rolls, they get a +2 equipment bonus on all Computer Use checks to operate the sensors, and they only have one light laser cannon (fire control +4, damage 3d10x2). Landing barges are similar to Gallofree medium transports, also found in *Starships of the Galaxy*. The specific complement varies from ship to ship, of course, depending on its mission profile.



A Rebel MC80 Mon Calamari Cruiser usually carries a wing of 36 fighters, also broken into squadrons of twelve. When good fighters are in short supply, they might all be Z-95s, but most commonly they are a mix of X-wings (for space superiority) and Y-wings (for assault). Later, A-wings and B-wings (from *Starships of the Galaxy*) are often used for interceptor and heavy bombing missions, respectively. Like Imperial ships, Rebel cruisers will tailor their fighter wings to their mission profile and fighter availability.

Other typical fighter complements for ships in the *Revised Core Rulebook* and *Starships of the Galaxy* are summarized in the table below, but keep in mind that there are variants of almost all these ships that carry a greater or fewer number of fighters, and almost any large ship with plenty of cargo space could potentially be converted into a carrier. Also, most ships that carry twelve or more starfighters have room for at least one shuttle or other Small-sized space transport.

Starship	Fighter Complement*	Source
Bothan Assault Cruiser	48 (any)	SotG
Carrack Light Cruiser	4 (usually TIE/rc)	SotG
Defender Star Destroyer	60 (any)	SotG
Dreadnaught	12 (any)	SotG
<i>Executor</i> (Super Star Destroyer)	144 (any)	SotG
Hapan Battle Dragon	36 (usually Miy'til fighters)	SotG
Hapan Nova Battle Cruiser**	22 (usually Miy'til fighters)	SotG
Immobilizer 418 (Interdictor)	24 (usually TIE interceptors)	SotG
Imperial Escort Carrier ***	72 (any) ***	SotG
Imperial-I Star Destroyer	72 (any)	RCR
Imperial-II Star Destroyer	72 (any)	SotG
Marauder Corvette	12 (any)	SotG
Mon Calamari MC80 Star Cruiser	36 (any)	RCR

Mon Calamari MC90 Star Cruiser	72 (any)	SotG
Nebulon-B Frigate	24 (any)	RCR
Republic Assault Ship	80 (usually LAAT gunships)	RCR
Trade Federation Battleship	1,500 (droid starfighters)	RCR
Victory-I/II Star Destroyer	24 (any)	SotG

* Does not include other carried craft (usually at least one per 12 fighters). Individual ships and variants within a class may have very different complements on board depending on their mission profile.

** Includes 12 Miy'til fighters and 10 Miy'til assault bombers normally, but can add 3 Miy'til fighters per assault bomber removed.

*** Carries six shuttles normally, but can add four shuttles per 12 fighters removed.

RCR = *Revised Core Rulebook*

SotG = *Starships of the Galaxy*

Q: Does Quick Draw allow a character to holster a weapon as a free action?

A: Technically, no -- it applies only to drawing a weapon. That said, a cinematic character concept can be worth a house rule. A blasterslinger who draws, fires, and holsters his weapon in the blink of an eye fits the *Star Wars* universe very well, so I think that allowing such a character to holster as a free action is a perfectly acceptable variant. If you don't want to simply give away a new ability for the same feat, you could require that the character also have the appropriate Weapon Focus feat to be able to holster a weapon as a free action.

Q: Having read many of your rulings, I've learned that when a lightsaber strikes something with a cortosis weave, it immediately shuts off. But from what I've seen in other *Star Wars* games such as **Knights of the Old Republic** and **Jedi Knight II: Jedi Outcast**, the main character fights opponents who use cortosis swords or armor. In **Jedi Knight II**, Kyle Katarn fights numerous dark Jedi who are wearing whole suits of cortosis armor, and his saber never shuts off. Should I use your rules for cortosis or theirs?

A: Actually, a better interpretation would be that there are different types of cortosis weave -- perhaps made using different cortosis alloys -- that are resistant to a lightsaber's damage instead of simply shutting it off. Such armor obviously exists, given our [previous ruling](#) on Jedi battle armor (from the *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook*) keeping its DR vs. lightsabers. I'd say this alternate version of cortosis weave has the same cost as normal cortosis weave. (For details, see chapter 4 of the *Dark Side Sourcebook*).

Similarly, a "cortosis" sword might just be an alloy that has some cortosis in it, allowing it to keep its DR vs. lightsabers, much like a Sith sword. I'd say that this adds 5,000 credits to the cost of a melee weapon and requires a Craft (appropriate weapon) check against DC 25, using the rules for making cortosis armor.

So, that's my ruling: The cortosis armor in the PC/console games is an alloy that allows the armor to keep its DR vs. a lightsaber, whereas the cortosis weave described in the roleplaying game until now (originally from the novels *I, Jedi* and *Vision of the Future*) is a different alloy that shuts lightsabers off after a hit.

Q: In "[Jedi Counseling](#)" 51, you said that the Illusion skill can create a light source. How? Isn't an Illusion only in the mind? How can it create illumination?

A: The problem is that I wasn't as clear as I should have been. When I said that Illusion can create a light source, I meant it would be an *illusionary* light source, just as one could create an illusionary Darth Vader or illusionary Death Star (to use examples from previous "Jedi Counseling" columns). I did *not* mean that this would be a true light source in the physical sense, just that characters would perceive it to be real. Think about the logic this way: If you created an illusionary fire, wouldn't it have to illuminate things around it? Of course it would -- that's a critical part of the illusion. No one would believe that a fire was real if they didn't see it giving off light. Thus, you can create an illusionary light source such as a fire, glowrod, or even ambient light.

Here's the catch: The Force-user doesn't gain better vision by creating an illusion, and the "illuminated" space will only be as accurate as the Force-user's perceptions. For example, if the Force-user has darkvision, he could

accurately create a black-and-white image of everything within 20 meters. If he had low-light vision, he could make moonlight as well lit as sunlight. In total darkness, he could use the Sense Surroundings technique (see *Power of the Jedi Sourcebook* and "[Jedi Counseling](#)" 25) to create vague glowing shapes representing the location of nearby living creatures.

Star Wars Miniatures Questions

Q: I have a few questions about R2-D2's Override ability. First, can Override be used to close a door that would normally stay open, such as when a character is adjacent to that door?

A: Yes. Override can be used to force a door closed (or open), regardless of the normal rules for opening and closing doors.



Q: What if a Large character was blocking the door? For example, imagine the head of a Stormtrooper on Dewback is on the east side of a door, but the tail is on the west side. Could Override force this door closed, and if so, what would happen to the Large character?

A: No, the safety systems on the door would prevent it from closing in that case.

Q: Okay, given all that, how do you keep a squad with R2-D2 from winning all the time? It seems that you can build a squad designed to defeat one enemy very quickly and then lock yourself in a room with one door for 10 rounds. No one can get in, so no one can attack anyone else. The side with R2 automatically wins as long as it defeats more points of enemies and finds a janitor's closet to hide in!

A: Well, this is a perfectly legitimate strategy, and the Rebel player can build a squad around this concept. Generally, though, it won't work well against a squad with very high-point characters. For example, you would be hard pressed to make a "quick strike" and earn easy points against a squad consisting of Darth Vader, Sith Lord and Emperor Palpatine. Still, if you ever manage to get ahead on points and can retreat "into the closet," so to speak, it can work quite well. (Expect the Imperial player to make every effort to defeat R2 early in the game, though.)

That said, we agree that overuse of this tactic can be annoying and a bit disrespectful to other players, especially if you use it repeatedly to win battles by running out the clock. It's fine to introduce a house rule if you find this to be disruptive -- the point, after all, is for both sides to have fun. For example, you might have a house rule that if Override is used for five consecutive rounds, R2 loses the ability to use Override for the rest of the battle because the central computer is able to isolate and bypass R2's comp link. Such a house rule usually wouldn't be necessary in a scenario with more specific objectives (such as "Rescue the Princess," or those in *Ultimate Missions: Rebel Storm*), but it would be a perfectly acceptable variant to adopt if this has been a problem for your group. Discuss it with other players before bringing it into play, and consider all the alternatives before coming to a final decision. In any event, the designers will continue to evaluate the problem.

Q: Can the Emperor make an attack of opportunity?

A: Technically, yes, but he does zero Damage, so it would have no effect.

Q: I'm confused about the Probe Droid's Recon ability. The stat card says it applies "if any allied character with Recon has line of sight to an enemy." Does this mean that you have to have a Probe Droid and *another* allied Probe Droid to get the benefit?

A: No, the wording is just confusing. You need only one Probe Droid to get the benefit of Recon. The ability to reroll initiative is really a special ability given to the *player*, not the droid -- thus, the Probe Droid is an "allied character" because it is in that player's squad. (Note that in team play, you get this benefit if your teammate has a Probe Droid in his squad because it is considered an "allied character.")

Q: Can Luke Skywalker, Rebel use his Impulsive Shot if he has already been activated in the turn?

A: Yes. Impulsive Shot gives him an immediate attack that is outside the normal round sequence. He can use it even if he has already been activated this round, and using it has no affect on activating him later in the round.



Q: Also, the Impulsive Shot rule says that it can be used "once per turn." Is that supposed to be "once per round"?

A: No, "once per turn" is correct. For example, if Darth Vader defeats Han Solo, Luke gets an immediate attack. If, on the next activation, a Stormtrooper defeats Leia, Luke gets another immediate attack. However, if Vader were to use Lightsaber Sweep and defeat Han Solo and Leia on the same turn, Luke would only get one immediate attack.

Q: Can a character with Bodyguard (or Emperor's Bodyguard) use this ability to take the damage from an attack even if they don't have enough hit points? If so, what happens to the excess damage?

A: Yes, they can use this ability even if the damage exceeds the Bodyguard character's current hit points. The excess damage is lost -- it's just "overkill."

Q: Can two or more characters with the Bodyguard ability create a "damage chain" that moves damage from the initial target, transfers it into an adjacent Bodyguard character, and then transfers it into another Bodyguard (and then another, and another, and so on) farther away?

A: No. The Bodyguard ability only works once against a given attack, so the damage can't be "chained" into another Bodyguard character.

Q: Can you use a Force point to change another character's rolls, or only your own? For example, can you use a Force point to allow an ally to reroll a low attack roll or to require an enemy to reroll a high attack roll? The glossary definition of Force point does say it works on "any die roll."

A: No, Force points can be used only to reroll a character's *own* attacks and saves. While the glossary definition may seem to say otherwise, take a look at the actual rules text on page 18 under "Force Points and Force Powers": "A *character* can spend one Force point to reroll an attack or save that *it has just made*." (emphasis added) The "it" in that sentence is referring to the character spending the Force point.

About the Author

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Jedi Counseling 56

Gary M. Sarli

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Star Wars Roleplaying Game Questions

Q: I've decided to play an Aquar, described on page 159 of *Coruscant and the Core Worlds*. That book says they're near-Human, but it also says they can breathe underwater. I've also noticed that they seem to have one more feat than a generic commoner. So, do the Aquar get the same species traits as Humans in addition to breathe underwater, or do they just get breathe underwater?

A: It looks like the Aquar are supposed to have a bonus feat and breathe underwater as species traits. However, unlike a Human, it looks like they do not get bonus skill points.

Q: I would like some advice on how to play out starship scenarios (obstacles, capital ships, dogfights, and so on) using the map grid where 1 inch equals 500 meters. Hypothetically speaking, a YT-1300 space transport occupies approximately a 1/16" square. A TIE fighter occupies approximately a 1/64" square, which is really small compared to the square itself. However, if more than one ship occupies a square, successful piloting rolls are necessary to avoid a collision. But you could fit thousands of TIE fighters in just one square with room to spare! Do you have any thoughts or suggestions that would help, other than re-scaling the map? I don't like to alter the rules if I can help it.

A: First, consider that 500 meters is not that much room when you're moving hundreds (or thousands) of kilometers per hour. In real life, air traffic controllers don't let commercial airliners get anywhere near that close. (In fact, their collision alarm would sound even when two planes were considerably farther apart.)

Second, the Pilot DC isn't that hard to pass. A Diminutive starship such as a TIE fighter has a base DC of only 5. Meanwhile, a TIE fighter has a maneuver modifier of +4 from its size. Thus, even with a Pilot skill of +0, you're guaranteed not to have a collision between two TIE fighters moving at cruising speed. Now, consider two TIE fighters (with the listed Pilot skill of +8 from +4 crew, +4 size). Even moving at ramming speed and crossing each other's path, the DC is only 15, and *both* Pilots have to fail the check for a collision to occur. Thus, there is only a 9% chance of a collision when two TIE fighters hurtle past each other at 6,000 km/h (that's roughly five times the speed of sound!) with fewer than 500 meters between them. That's not too bad.

Still, it's your game, and if you think collisions happen too often, just lower the DCs by 5 or 10 points as a house rule.

Q: I was curious about the Imperial Royal Guard armor. Is it the same as stormtrooper armor?

A: Almost. Guardsman's armor was described on page 43 of *Star Wars Gamer* #10 -- the armor used by the Supreme Chancellor's Guard and the Imperial Royal Guard was identical. It is powered armor with DR 5, Max Dex +2, and Armor Check Penalty -2; it provides a +2 equipment bonus to Listen, Search, and Spot checks; and its cost is 8,000 credits. (Note that this cost is for comparative purposes only. The armor would *never* be sold on the open market, and since so few Guardsmen exist, it would have an extremely high "collector's value" in the black market and sell for 10 to 100 times as much, maybe even more.)



Q: Can you take 10 or take 20 when using the Alchemy skill from the *Dark Side Sourcebook*?

A: You can take 10, but you can't take 20 because you do pay a cost for failure.

Q: When using the Off-hand Parry Feat from the *Hero's Guide*, do you still receive your attack from your second weapon?

A: Yes, you may still attack with your off-hand weapon. (Nothing in the text forbids it.)

Q: One of my players wants to create a double-bladed vibro sword. Do you think it should be covered by Weapon Group Proficiency (vibro weapons) or Exotic Weapon Proficiency (double-bladed vibro sword)?

A: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (double-bladed vibro sword) is most appropriate.

Q: I have a player who wants to play a Force adept martial artist. His weapon of choice is combat gloves, and this has led to questions about imbued weapons. Can he imbue the gloves together, or would he need to imbue each glove separately?

A: Well, first, combat gloves don't technically qualify as "melee weapons." You aren't considered armed just by wearing them. (See [Jedi Counseling #5](#).) You may allow a character to imbue his hands (with or without combat gloves) if he has the Martial Arts feat. This isn't the official rule, but it's an acceptable and common variant.

As for imbuing the weapons, each use imbues only one weapon, so each glove would need to be done separately -- if the GM allows it at all.

Q: Since an imbued weapon is strong enough to be "resistant" to a lightsaber, would that apply to the character's hands as well?

A: Well, your hands don't have a natural DR, so it's a moot point. The lightsaber would still ignore the character's armor in any event. Besides, the only way his hands would be attacked is if you're using the Hit Location optional rules (*Galactic Campaign Guide*, pages 39-41).

Q: The martial arts feat Teräs Käsi Expertise allows you to block one attack from a melee weapon. If the Force adept/martial artist imbued his hands with the Force, could he block a lightsaber without harm?

A: Sure, but Teräs Käsi Expertise would allow you to block a lightsaber, anyway. (Obviously, you don't block the *blade* -- you block the attack by hitting, twisting, or otherwise interfering with your opponent's hand or arm, or the lightsaber's hilt.)

Q: Is it possible to ready an action to use Force Strike against a grenade or rocket, and what would be the effect?

A: If used against a grenade, it would take 3d4 points of damage. Apply DR and see if the grenade survives. If it doesn't, I would rule that it detonates immediately at a range of 10 meters (the maximum range of Force Strike) or the distance to the thrower, whichever is less. Note that you could just as easily use Move Object to "catch" the grenade with a readied action.

A rocket, on the other hand, moves too fast. I'd rule that Force Strike wouldn't work on a rocket any more than it would on a bullet.

Star Wars Miniatures Questions

Q: Can you clarify the use of force powers by the Emperor and Darth Vader? Are the use of Force lightning and Force grip automatically successful, or do the normal rules of attack and defense values apply?

A: Unless the special ability says that you make an attack or that the target gets a save, the Force power (or other special ability) is automatically successful. Thus, both Force Lightning and Force Grip do not require an attack, and neither allows a save.

Q: If Darth Vader, Dark Jedi is in a scenario that has a rule for gaining reinforcements, will the fresh reinforcements have the same bonus from his commander effect as the original members of his squad? For example, if one character rolls a natural 1 and the rest of the squad gets a +2, would new reinforcements in the next round get the same +2, or would they start at +0?

A: The same bonus applies to all allied characters, including reinforcements. (No one wants to keep track of different bonuses from the same commander effect, anyway.)



Q: The **Star Wars Miniatures** rulebook defines "Hand of the Emperor" as follows (verbatim): "In addition to spending its own Force points once per turn, a character with this special ability can spend Force points from Emperor Palpatine once per turn. Emperor Palpatine must be in your squad for this ability to work."

The way this is worded suggests to me that Mara may use her Force points to use Blaster Barrage, and then use additional Force points from Emperor Palpatine to use Blaster Barrage again, should she choose to do so.

A: First, she only needs 1 Force Point to use Blaster Barrage. Second, she can only use one of the Emperor's Force Points in any given round. Third, she can't use Blaster Barrage twice in the same round -- it replaces attacks, so even if she uses one of the Emperor's Force Points, she can't use Blaster Barrage again. (She wouldn't have another attack to give up.)

Q: When playing a three-person game on the blank map with the tile inserts, and someone has line of sight from one player's starting point to another player's starting point, can you make a legal shot on the characters that have not activated at all in the game?

A: Yes. Each player would be wise to place tiles in such a way that they block line of sight during the first round.

Q: I have a few questions about Grand Moff Tarkin's commander effect. First, does Grand Moff Tarkin need to have line of sight to the allies he is activating?

A: No. Remember, *Tarkin* isn't activating the characters, *you* (the player) are. Tarkin only needs line of sight to an enemy at the start of any given phase.

Q: Can Tarkin use this ability more than once a round?

A: Yes, it applies at the beginning of every one of your phases.

Q: Do the allies he has activated have to attack the enemy to whom Tarkin has line of sight, or can they attack any enemy the player chooses?

A: They can attack any enemy the player chooses (or take any other action, for that matter).

Q: When a player has used Tarkin's commander ability and moved all three allies, does that count as one attack or two?

A: It doesn't count as an attack at all -- Tarkin doesn't have to use actions for this commander effect to function. If he has line of sight to an enemy at the beginning of a phase, the player can activate up to three characters (instead of the normal two).

If you meant to ask, "Does Tarkin's use of this commander effect count as one of those activations?" then the answer is no. Tarkin's commander effect does not require you to activate him at all, and it does not have any impact on his normal activation earlier or later in the round.

Q: If a player has two characters next to a door and the one who closed the door moves, the door stays closed for the complete turn, right?

A: No. As long as someone is adjacent to the door at the end of a turn, the door stays open. (A door opens and closes only at the end of a turn, with the exception of R2's Override ability.) No one can "close" a door, except for someone with Override.

Q: Can a player use a character to keep a door locked?

A: No. No one can "lock" a door. The closest thing to it is the Override ability keeping a door closed until R2's next turn (in the next round). In the Rescue the Princess scenario, only a Rebel can open Leia's cell, but that's not the same as it being "locked."

Other than using Override, I can think of only one way to keep a door closed -- put enemies around the door in such a way that you can't physically get adjacent to the door. (Note that, with a normal door, the enemies can't be adjacent, either, or it will automatically open. The Rescue the Princess scenario is an exception, allowing the Imperial characters to stand adjacent to the door without it opening.)

Q: During the Rescue the Princess scenario, if players roll the same number for initiative, must the Imperial player use the original roll or the tie-breaker for determining reinforcements?

A: Use the tie-breaker.

About the Author

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Jedi Counseling 57

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Star Wars Roleplaying Game Questions

Q: I have a question about assigning natural armor score to creatures. The *Revised Core Rulebook* has rules for making your own creatures, but I couldn't find how to calculate natural armor or, for that matter, which creatures should have natural armor. Is this a level-dependent score, like a PC's class defense bonus? Is it related to the creature's Constitution or size?

A: It's actually determined more by the creature's description and how you conceptualize it than anything else. Assign natural armor based on what kind of skin the creature has:

Normal skin: +0
Thick skin or fur: +1 to +3
Tough hide: +4 to +7
Scales: +5 or more
Exoskeleton: +2 or more
Shell or carapace: +10 or more
Very tough hide: +8 to +15

These are just rough ranges, of course. As for Damage Reduction, you should only assign it to creatures with exceptionally tough hide or those that are of Huge or greater size. If non-airborne, Huge creatures should get DR 5, Gargantuan DR 10, and Colossal DR 15; airborne creatures should have DR 5 only if they are Colossal. (This is errata originally published in *Ultimate Adversaries*, and these should be considered minimum values for all creatures in other sourcebooks.)

If you give DR to other creatures, generally subtract twice that DR from their natural armor bonus. For example, the acklay (*Revised Core Rulebook* page 335) is Huge, so it should have a DR of at least 5. It also is described as having an "armored exoskeleton," so that should get a very good natural armor bonus -- let's say +12, a bit more than the minimum for a shell or carapace. The designer decides the acklay should have a little extra DR, so he adds +2 to its DR and subtracts 4 from its natural armor bonus. The result is a +8 natural armor bonus and DR 7.

Q: On page 41 of the *Revised Core Book*, it says "Once designated, the skill is considered a class skill every time the character adds a new level of fringer." Does this mean that the benefit of designating a new class skill doesn't kick in until the next fringer level, or can fringers purchase new class skills at class skill cost at the same level they gain this class feature?

A: The wording is a bit confusing, but it's supposed to apply starting on the level that you select the new class skill. For example, if a fringer selects Move Silently as a class skill at 1st level, it counts as a class skill when spending his initial skill points.

Q: The elite trooper's Weapon Specialization class feature adds +2 damage against a target at a range of up to 10 meters. The *Hero's Guide* has a Weapon Specialization feat that is identical except that it does not have a range limit. Are these two abilities supposed to be the same? If not, do they stack?

A: These two things were not meant to stack, but they normally would if they were two separate abilities. To function as intended, the elite trooper's Weapon Specialization should be considered a "virtual feat." Therefore,

consider this errata:

- In the elite trooper's Weapon Specialization class feature (*Revised Core Rulebook* page 272), delete the last sentence of the paragraph. Weapon Specialization works at any range.
 - In the Weapon Specialization feat description (*Hero's Guide* page 47), add the following paragraph at the end of the "Special" text: "An elite trooper's Weapon Specialization class ability works the same as this feat; it substitutes for Weapon Specialization for the purpose of satisfying any prerequisites, and its effects do not stack with this feat."
-

Q: When you buy a weapon, does it come with a power pack or energy cell?

A: No. (Batteries not included.) This also applies to other types of ammunition such as slugs, arrows, or quarrels.

Q: What about a lightsaber? It uses a special energy cell. Does this have to be purchased separately as well?

A: No, lightsabers are an exception because their energy cell is built into them during the construction process. This energy cell generally needs to be replaced only if the lightsaber is seriously damaged.

Q: How much does slugthrower ammunition cost?

A: It appears this was accidentally left off the weapons chart, partially because it varies so widely depending on the specific model of slugthrower. Generally, a clip of 10 slugs should cost about 5 credits. Specific slugthrowers, such as those found in the *Arms & Equipment Guide*, may use smaller or larger clips of ammunition; the cost is listed individually with each weapon.

Q: What Craft skill covers creating power packs or energy cells? How about ammunition for other weapons such as slugthrowers or bowcasters?

A: Craft (electronic devices) allows the creation of power packs and energy cells. For non-energy weapons, the ammunition is covered by the same Craft skill as the weapon itself. For example, you can create slugthrower ammunition with Craft (slugthrowers).

Q: The stats for super battle droids on page 373 of the *Revised Core Rulebook* seem to have a problem: They don't detail the wrist-mounted mini-repeating blaster we see in *Attack of the Clones*. The super battle droids only have stats as if they're carrying a normal blaster rifle. Do you have revised stats for this wrist weapon?



A: You're right: The super battle droid stats do not include any mention of their twin-barreled, wrist-mounted blaster. So, here's some errata.

- First, let's say that the blaster rifle shown in the super battle droid stat block is actually a "double blaster rifle" on a stabilized weapon mount (these are detailed on page 157 of *Ultimate Adversaries* -- they basically allow a droid to wield a two-handed weapon on one arm/mount). Thus, it's "built in" to the droid, not carried.
 - Second, unlike the typical blaster rifle, these are capable of single attacks, multfire, *and* autofire, much like the ESPO riot gun from the *Arms & Equipment Guide*.
 - Third, the attack bonuses listed in the stat block appear to be correct, so all you have to add are multfire/autofire penalties when the droid uses them. Therefore, its ranged attack options are +2 ranged (3d8, double blaster rifle), -2/-2 ranged (3d8, double blaster rifle, multfire), or -4/-4/-4 ranged (3d8, double blaster rifle, autofire).
-

Star Wars Miniatures Questions

Q: Is it legal to mix the Fringe miniatures from the *Rebel Storm* expansion set with those of the new *Clone Strike* set?

A: Technically, no, because this would be impossible within *Star Wars* continuity. That said, there's nothing wrong with "what if" scenarios that feature Darth Vader fighting Darth Maul, and you'll find that the minis are completely compatible. Therefore, the answer is that you *can* mix minis from the original trilogy and prequel trilogy, but only if everyone in the game agrees to do so.

However, you may freely use Fringe characters from either set in your squads. (It's therefore possible for Jango and Boba Fett to fight side by side.)

Q: I have a question about Lightsaber Block. Let's say that Mace Windu scores a critical hit on Count Dooku. Count Dooku rolls for Lightsaber Block and saves. The entire damage is totally nullified, correct? There is no account for the critical hit being an automatic success at all?

A: That is correct: Lightsaber Block completely nullifies the damage from a melee attack, regardless of whether it is a critical hit.

Q: I've noticed a discrepancy between Count Dooku's Sith Lightning on his stat card and in the glossary. What is the correct Force point cost?

A: The stat card is correct: Sith Lightning costs 2 Force points to use.



Q: I also noticed a similar problem with Darth Maul's Sith Rage. Is the stat card or the glossary correct?

A: Again, the stat card is correct: Sith Rage costs 1 Force point to use.

Q: I have some questions about Zam Wesell's Kouhun Infestation special ability. First, how do you count range?

A: You count range basically the same way you would count movement -- diagonals count as two squares, and so forth. The range is measured along the shortest path to the target.

Q: Does Kouhun Infestation work through closed doors?

A: No. (*Attack of the Clones* demonstrates that they can't even get through windows without a little help!) As noted in the glossary, you can't count range through a wall, and a closed door is treated as a wall for all purposes.

Q: What about the fact that this ability doesn't require line of sight? Wouldn't that mean it should work through walls or closed doors, anyway?

A: No. Line of sight is normally a requirement for any target of special abilities (just as it would be a requirement for a normal attack). Dropping that requirement does not change how range is measured.

Q: One last question, then: If used against a target not in line of sight, how would that work with the cover and adjacent enemy requirements for special abilities?

A: First, if Zam Wesell has an adjacent enemy, she would not be able to use Kouhun Infestation against any non-adjacent target. (This is exactly the same as any other attack or special ability). Second, a target not in line of sight would automatically be considered



to have cover -- obviously, it would be impossible to draw an unobstructed line to all four corners of the target's square. Thus, Kouhun Infestation can't be used against a target not in line of sight unless that target is also the closest enemy.

Q: I've seen your previous Jedi Counseling rulings on the Emperor's Force Lightning and how he can "zap" himself under certain circumstances. Would this happen with Force Storm as well?

A: No. Force Storm only affects adjacent characters. It doesn't work like Force Lightning at all, and the Emperor can't accidentally hurt himself with it.

Q: When a character is trying to move and provokes an attack of opportunity, is it considered activated even if it hasn't performed any action or movement before then? The rulebook says that it occurs before the move happens, so would it be possible for Han Solo to add Cunning Attack bonuses to his attacks of opportunity?

A: Remember, a character is activated before taking any actions. When the player selects which character to activate during his phase, that character is considered to be activated immediately. (This applies even if that character takes no actions at all during its turn.) So, the answer is no: Han Solo would never get to add Cunning Attack to his attacks of opportunity. It only applies against a target that has not been activated that round.

About the Author

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Jedi Counseling 58

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Star Wars Roleplaying Game Questions

Q: One of my players and I recently got into a dispute over the Merr-Sonn Targeter Ranging Scope in the *Arms & Equipment Guide*. Its special description states that it allows a ranged weapon to ignore the first two range increment penalties when firing at long range, and nothing else. Then, further down in the overall description of the attachment, it says, "When mounted atop a blaster rifle, this scope reduces the effect of range." I read that as meaning that it only applied to blaster rifles and that the scope couldn't be used on any other type of weapon. My player claims that since it never specifically states "blaster rifles only," he could mount the scope on his slugthrower pistol and use it effectively. Who's right?

A: I looked up the original version of the Merr-Sonn Targeter (from *Rules of Engagement*, a book for the old West End Games version of the **Star Wars Roleplaying Game**), and it appears that this particular model was designed for "blaster and slugthrowing rifles and carbines." However, as your player pointed out, the Merr-Sonn Targeter's rules text from the *Arms & Equipment Guide* does not mention any such restriction, nor do the rules for targeting scopes in the *Hero's Guide*. Really, there's no reason why only rifles can have a targeting scope. In real life, they do make scopes for hunting bows, but the scope for a bow isn't designed to be interchangeable with one for a rifle.

Therefore, my interpretation is that any one specific model of targeting scope is designed for use with either one-handed modern weapons (blaster pistols, heavy blaster pistols, slugthrower pistols, and so on), two-handed modern weapons (blaster rifles, blaster carbines, slugthrower rifles, and so on), heavy weapons (heavy repeating blaster, E-Web, blaster cannon, and so on), or a unique model for each exotic or primitive weapon (bowcaster, bow, and so on). The price, availability, and so forth does not change for different models. A DC 20 Repair check and one hour of work will allow you to adapt a scope to the wrong type of weapon. (Targeting scopes don't work with vehicle or starship weapons, but those usually have fire control instead.)

Thus, in a way, both you and your player are right: The scopes aren't really designed to be interchangeable, but there will be another model that he can use for any given weapon with the same cost and effect.

Q: Is there some reason a Ryyk blade or a typical longsword has DR 10? I noticed that a typical Small or Medium weapon has DR 5. So why are these bladed weapons different from other weapons in their size categories? Is it because the blades themselves are forged metal, with no operating components? If so, does this mean that most weapons with a hardness of 5 are made of something other than metal or have complicated components?

A: It's because metals such as steel or similar alloys have a DR of 10, and the Ryyk blade and longsword don't have delicate working parts that make them more susceptible to damage. A blaster, on the other hand, has a lot of working parts that might be damaged by a sudden jolt, even if the outer casing wasn't harmed.

DR isn't based solely on the hardness of the outer casing of an object. It's supposed to represent how susceptible that object is to sustaining meaningful damage. Thus, a blast door has DR 15 because it's made of heavy metal (DR 15) and has only simple working parts. However, imagine that you made a handheld scanner with a heavy metal case; it has delicate circuitry and sensor modules, which might be damaged from something as simple as being dropped. Thus, even with a heavy metal casing, it wouldn't have DR 15, but something more like DR 5. (To use a real-world example, you wouldn't put a notebook computer in a metal case and then toss it off the roof, because the internal parts would



almost certainly be damaged even if the metal case was unharmed.)

Q: If a Jedi consular's base attack bonus is +0 at 1st level, how can the Jedi get the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) feat, since its prerequisite is base attack bonus +1?

A: As a general rule, when a class gets a *specific* feat as a bonus or starting feat, you usually don't have to meet the prerequisites. The class was given that specific feat for a reason and was meant to always have it. (It's hard to imagine a Jedi who can't use a lightsaber, for example.) In contrast, when you're choosing a bonus feat from a list -- for example, a soldier's bonus feats -- you do have to meet the prerequisites. These are just rules of thumb, though; there may be the occasional exception.

So, just to be clear: The Jedi consular does get to use Exotic Weapon Proficiency (lightsaber) at 1st level, regardless of its normal prerequisites.

Q: When a character gains a level and should obtain a feat, must she acquire the feat immediately, or may she "pass" and acquire the feat at a later level? For example, a 6th-level Jedi may want to wait until 7th level before acquiring feats, so that she could gain Force Mastery as the Knight Feat and Knight Speed as the 6th-level feat. Of course, this applies not only to Jedi, but to anyone wanting a feat that has a prerequisite based on level or a level-obtained stat, such as base attack or perhaps even an Ability score.

I'm almost certain that this is not allowed, but I haven't found a rule on it. It seems to me that allowing it would make the character too weak for a few levels, and then too strong for any remaining levels.

A: Technically, characters are supposed to take the feats as soon as they reach the appropriate level. That said, I know that many gamers have a house rule allowing you to delay a feat selection, the idea being that having no feat at all for one or two levels is a sufficient cost for gaining a superior feat later.

So, strictly by the rules, the answer is no, but you wouldn't be alone if you made it a house rule.

Q: Here's a stumper. My Jedi consular recently went toe to toe with a Trade Federation Tank, attacking it with her lightsaber. On its initiative, it opted to fire its lasers at the poor soul. Being substantially larger than blaster rifles and their ilk, does this provoke an attack of opportunity, as I was "threatening" the side the turret was on?

A: No, that doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity. Only a ranged weapon literally wielded in two hands (or tentacles or whatever a particular creature has) counts. For example, a droid wielding a blaster rifle (such as a normal battle droid) takes an attack of opportunity, but one with a two-handed weapon built into a weapon mount (such as a droideka) does not. In other words, a mounted weapon built into the structure of a vehicle (or droid) doesn't provoke the attack of opportunity.



Q: On that note, if a Large or Huge creature can fire a light repeating blaster in one hand, does it provoke an attack of opportunity?

A: Well, a light repeating blaster is still in the Blaster Rifles group, and you're supposed to wield those two-handed, anyway. If you take a -4 penalty and wield it one-handed (see [Jedi Counseling 8](#)), then no, you don't get an attack of opportunity for firing it. Just to be clear, though, since the repeating blaster is Large, the character would have to be Large or greater size to do this.

Star Wars Miniatures Questions

Q: I have a question about the Battle Droid Officer's Fire Control special ability. The FAQ states that commander effects that affect the same roll or statistic do not stack. Fire Control is not a commander effect, since droids are immune to them. So, can the effects of multiple Battle Droid Officers stack?

A: No. The glossary definition of "stacking" states that "no effect produced by a Force power, special ability, commander effect, or cover stacks with itself." Therefore, multiple Battle Droid Officers do not grant a higher bonus. (The only reason to have more is to give you a backup in case one is defeated.)

Commander effects are basically subject to an additional restriction in that you can't stack two or more commander effects (even from different sources) that provide a bonus to the same roll or statistic. That's what the FAQ was referring to.



Q: Can Aayla Secura use the Bodyguard ability and then use Lightsaber Deflect to take no damage?

A: No. The Bodyguard ability states that "if an adjacent allied character would take damage from an attack, a Bodyguard character can take the damage instead, even if it is not a legal target for the attacker." At no point is the Bodyguard character ever actually targeted or attacked -- it simply takes the damage.



Q: With the Spotter ability, when it says "a target within 6 squares," does this refer to an enemy within 6 squares of the Spotter, an enemy within 6 squares of the attacker, or an enemy within 6 squares of both?

A: The enemy has to be within 6 squares of the Spotter character. As a rule of thumb, when a special ability refers to someone being in a particular range, assume it's referring to the range from the character with the special ability unless it specifically says otherwise.

Q: Do I have this right? When Mara Jade uses Blaster Barrage, if she chooses to attack an opponent with cover (and it's the nearest, or tied for the nearest) she can only hit that target (or those targets, if multiple characters have cover and are all the same distance away). Even if there are other non-covered targets in range, the barrage won't hit them if even one character with cover has been targeted.

A: No, that's not right. You must determine if each target would be a legal target before using the ability, and someone having cover doesn't change the legality of other targets. Let me give you some examples to help illustrate this.

Imagine that Mara has line of sight to five enemies: The closest has cover, the next three don't, and the last has cover. She will get to attack the closest one with cover and the three without cover, but not the farthest one with cover. (You can only attack an enemy with cover if it is also the closest enemy.)

Second scenario, again with five enemies: The closest two (4 squares away) both have cover, and the three farthest away don't. Mara can attack all five characters.

Third scenario, again with five: The closest one doesn't have cover, but two of the other four do. Mara can only attack the three enemies without cover.

Does that explain it?

Q: How does C-3PO's Draw Fire work when Mara Jade is using Blaster Barrage? For example, Mara Jade uses Blaster Barrage and has four legal targets (including C-3PO). Does Mara Jade's barrage ability "target"? If C-3PO uses Draw Fire and makes the roll, does he "retarget" all four of her shots to him, or does he roll for each other target he's trying to draw fire for? Does Mara try to hit C-3PO for each Draw Fire success he rolled, or does she only get to make one shot?

A: Mara Jade is considered to "target" each enemy when using this ability, so C-3PO's Draw Fire ability does work against it. Resolve each attack (including the Draw Fire attempt, if necessary) one at a time, and Mara Jade's player gets to decide what order to take the attacks in. (These are "simultaneous effects," and that player is the acting player.)



To use your example, let's say Mara Jade has four legal targets: Rebel Trooper, Rebel Commando, Rebel Pilot, and C-3PO. She decides to attack C-3PO first, hoping to take him out of the fight, but he survives the hit. She then targets the Rebel Commando, but C-3PO makes his Draw Fire roll, so she attacks C-3PO instead; again, he survives the hit. She then targets the Rebel Trooper, but C-3PO fails his Draw Fire roll, so she attacks and hits the Rebel Trooper, defeating him. Finally, she targets the Rebel Pilot, and C-3PO makes his Draw Fire roll; Mara Jade hits and defeats C-3PO with this last attack.

Q: In a recent installment of Jedi Counseling, you clarified how Strafe works. However, what would happen if you're moving your Speeder Bike (either kind) 12 spaces, strafing as you go along, and then, when you hit your 12th square, your Strafe attack misses? You can't have two miniatures in the same place. Does the bike explode? Is it a free kill? Is the bike moved out of the way? What if there's no room for the bike to land anywhere else?

A: Technically, this shouldn't happen. Any character, even one with Flight, has to have a legal square to end in before it starts moving. In other words, your last bit of movement must be into an unoccupied square. Strafe just gives you the ability to attack everyone from your starting position to your ending (landing) spot.

About the Author

Gary M. Sarli is a freelance writer and editor whose credits include *Ultimate Adversaries* (*Star Wars RPG*) and *Monster Manual III* (Dungeons & Dragons). He also moderates on the Wizards.COMmunity message boards as WizO the Hutt, cheerfully feeding Code of Conduct violators to the Sarlacc. Gary still works as a staff member for [SWRPGNetwork](#), three-time ENnie Award winner in the Best Fan Website category and host of the [Star Wars RPG Frequently Asked Questions](#).

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